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1968

A SKETCH

OF

THE EVENTS

WHICH PRECEDED THE

CAPTURE OF WASHINGTON,

BY THE

BRITISH,

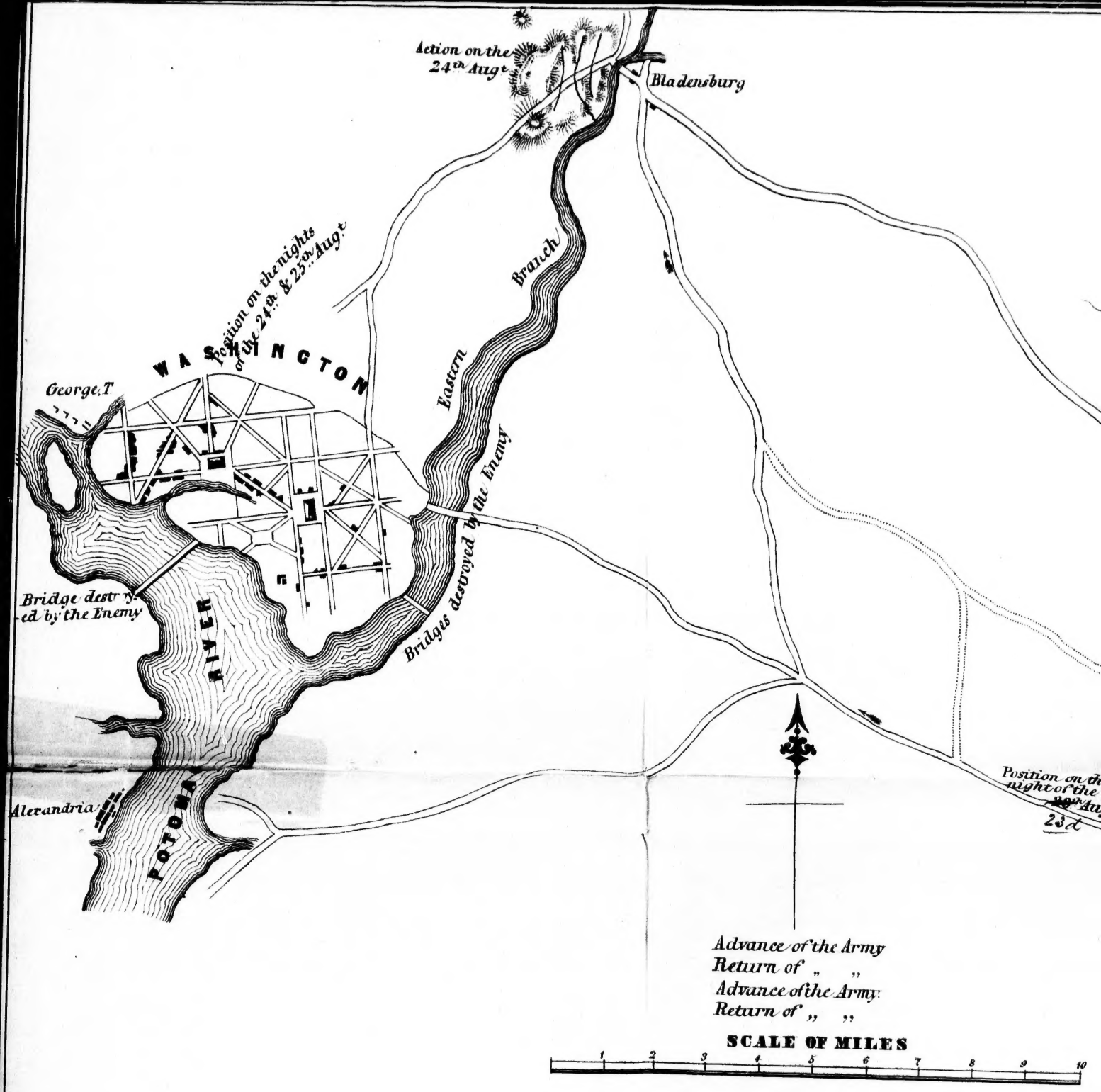
ON THE

TWENTY-FOURTH OF AUGUST, 1814.

E. D. Ingraham

"If we desire to avoid *insult*, we must be *prepared* to repel it."—G. WASHINGTON, 1793.

PHILADELPHIA:
CAREY AND HART, 126,
CHARLES MARSHALL, 148 CHESTNUT STREET.
1849.


Action on the 24th Augt
Bladensburg
Position on the nights of the 24th & 25th Augt
WASHINGTON
George T.
Eastern Branch
Bridge destroyed by the Enemy
Bridge destroyed by the Enemy
POTOMA RIVER
Alexandria
Position on the night of the 23d
Advance of the Army
Return of " "
Advance of the Army
Return of " "
SCALE OF MILES
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

SKETCH

OF THE

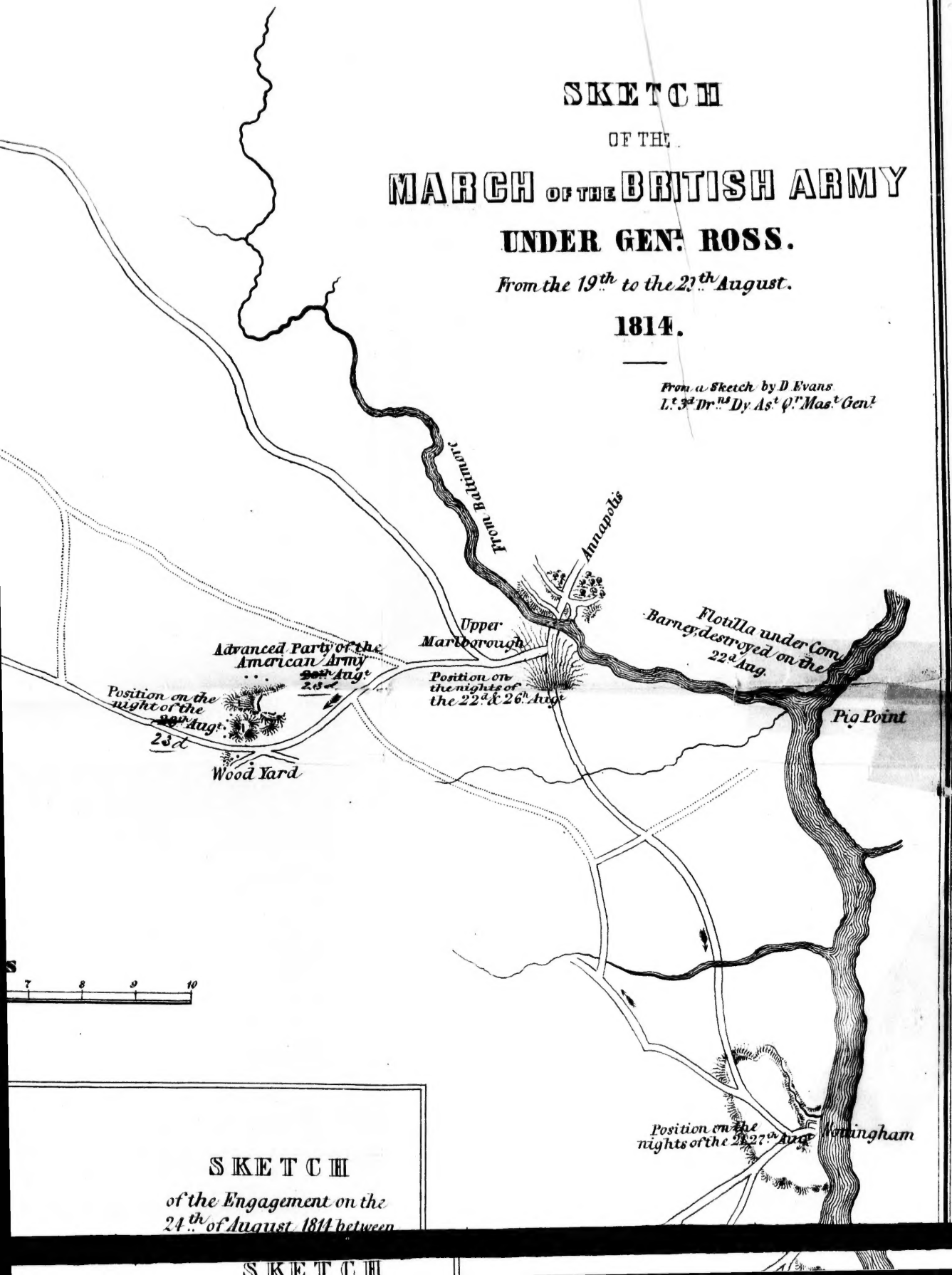
MARCH OF THE BRITISH ARMY

UNDER GEN.L ROSS.

From the 19th to the 27th August.

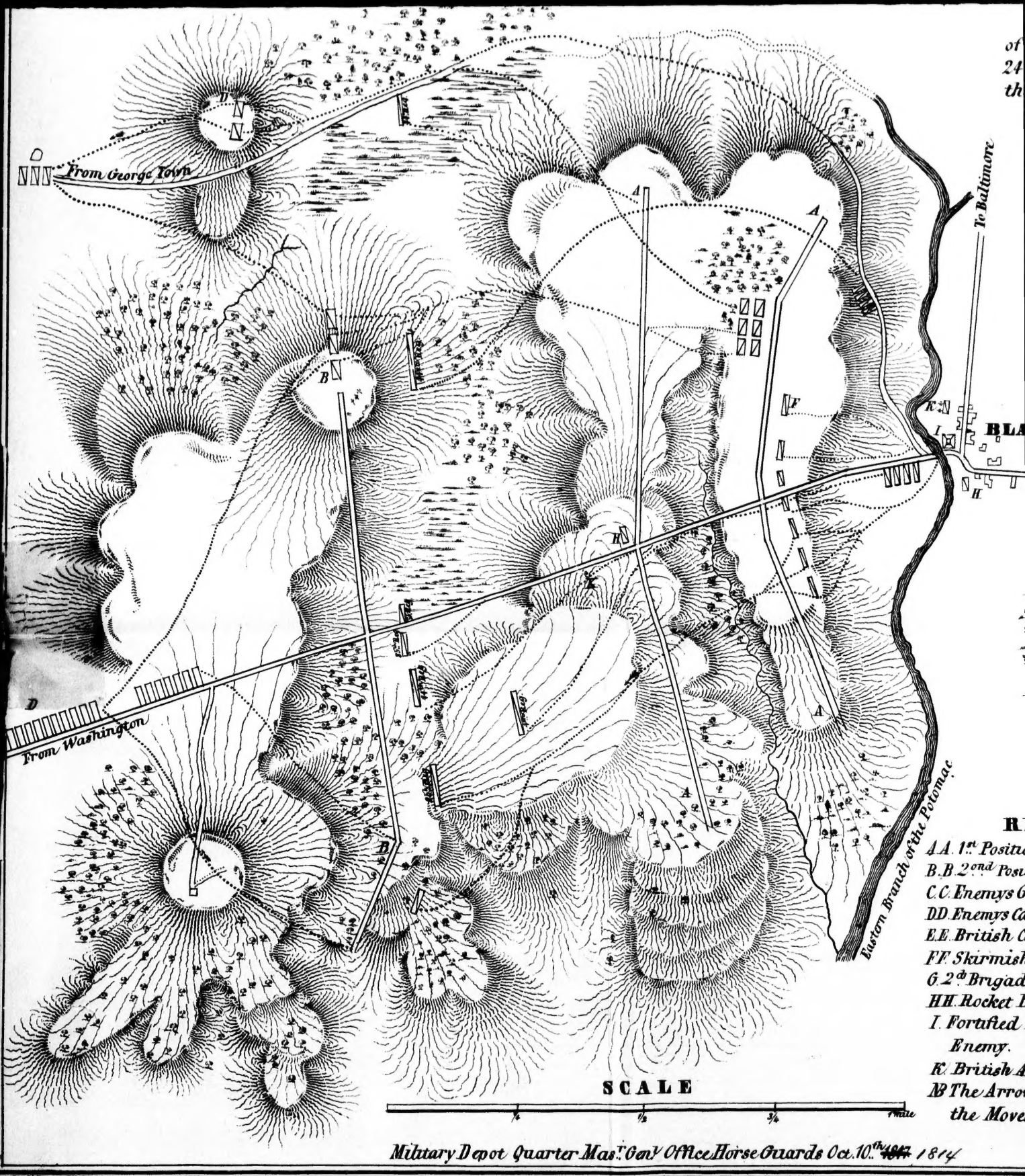
1814.

From a Sketch by D Evans
L.t 3d Dr.ns Dy As.t Q.r Mas.t Gen.l



SKETCH

of the Engagement on the 24th of August 1814 between



of
24
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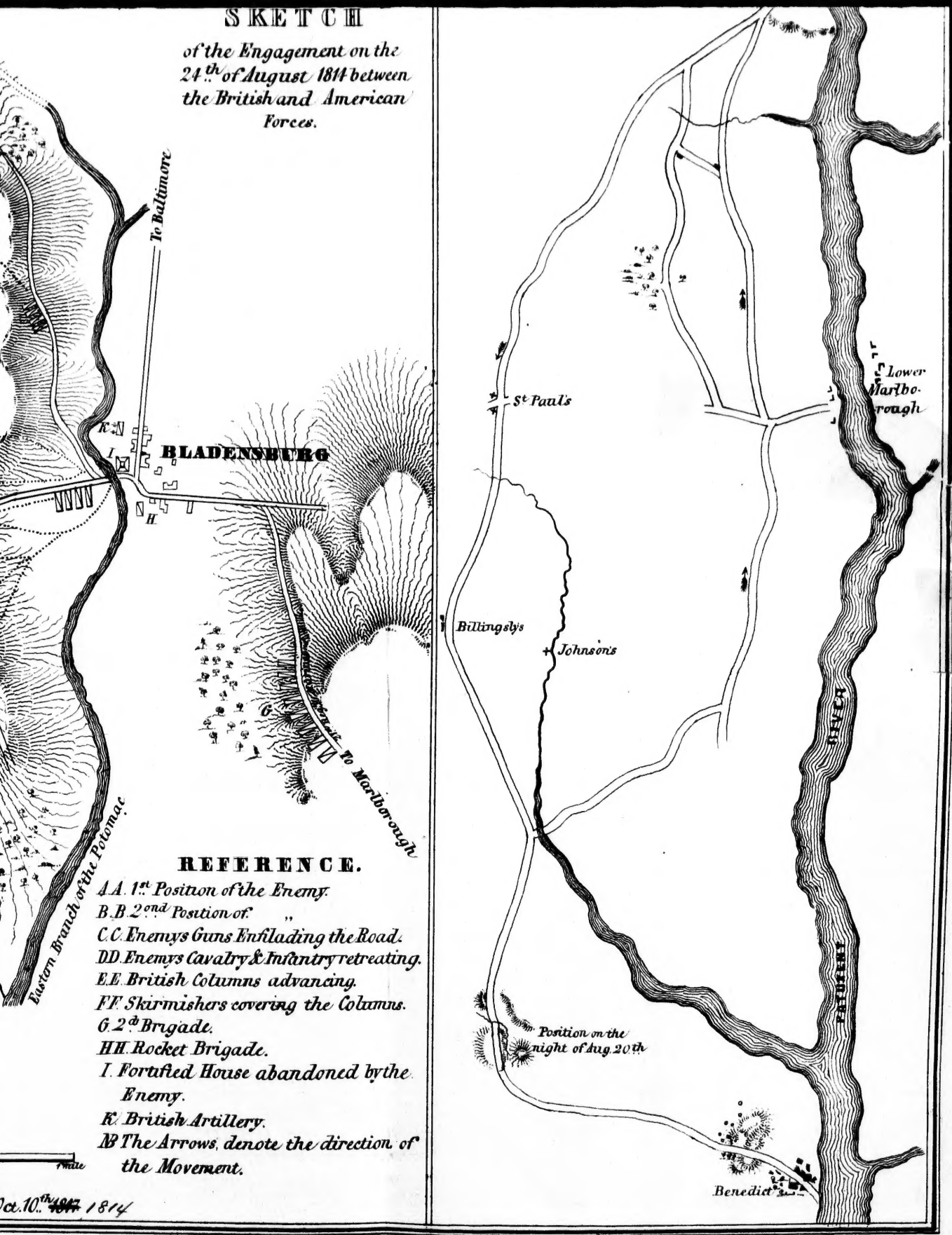
RL

A A. 1st Positi
B B. 2nd Posi
C C. Enemys G
D D. Enemys Ca
E E. British C
F F. Skirmish
G. 2d Brigad
H H. Rocket B
I. Fortified
Enemy.
K. British A
NB The Arrow
the Move

Military Depot Quarter Mas.r Gen.l Office Horse Guards Oct. 10th ~~1817~~ 1814

SKETCH

of the Engagement on the 24th of August 1814 between the British and American Forces.



REFERENCE.

A.A. 1st Position of the Enemy.
B.B. 2nd Position of "
C.C. Enemys Guns Enfilading the Road.
D.D. Enemys Cavalry & Infantry retreating.
E.E. British Columns advancing.
F.F. Skirmishers covering the Columns.
G. 2d Brigade.
H.H. Rocket Brigade.
I. Fortified House abandoned by the Enemy.
K. British Artillery.
NB The Arrows, denote the direction of the Movement.

Scale

Oct. 10th ~~1817~~ 1814

T Sinclair's lith Phila.

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I5

125967

Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1849, by
EDWARD D. INGRAHAM,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

PHILADELPHIA:
T. K. AND P. G. COLLINS, PRINTERS.

67

nsylvania.

For Mr. John H. Wheeler.
from the Author, Oct. 7. 1857.

PREFACE.

An accidental circumstance, in the summer of 1848, induced me to view the ground on which the battle of Bladensburg was fought, and a desire to become better acquainted with the state of things which preceded that disastrous event, led me to search for information from various sources. Many of the cotemporaneous publications have disappeared entirely; others are scarce, and not readily procured; and it was found to be no easy matter to arrange the various materials which, with considerable industry, I had collected together. An increasing interest in the subject, derived from my researches, led me to seek for unpublished papers and documents, of which some have been furnished by the families of the actors in the scenes described, and others by some of the few surviving actors themselves. Having satisfied my own curiosity, and formed my own opinion, the thought struck me that, perhaps, that which had so much interested me, might not be without interest for those who were inclined to examine into the history of the events of their own country; and I

was induced to extend the notes I had made in the course of my inquiries, into the sketch which is now given to the public. I am indebted for the map, exhibiting the ground, and the positions of the American troops and the enemy's forces, to the kindness of Peter Force, Esq., of Washington, from whose excellent Historical Library I have also derived much and valuable assistance.

E. D. I.

Philadelphia, March 1, 1849.

A SKETCH OF THE EVENTS, &c.

"WERE nations to review in peace their motives for having made war, with the means they employed, and the method by which they conducted it, they would, in general, find much to blame in a moral as well as a military view; the conviction of the wrongs they did, and the blunders they committed, might, on another and similar occasion, improve both their ethics and tactics, and make them, at once, better men and abler soldiers; but as nations cannot be brought together, it rests with governments to perform this duty of self examination, when, if they omit it, the task devolves on the historian."(1)

IT is proposed to review the method by which a portion of the war of 1812 was conducted, which led to the deep disgrace of the nation abroad, and its deeper mortification at home. The capture of Washington by a handful of men, after more than twelve months' notice to the proper authority of coming danger, and more than six months of actual, impending peril, ought never to be forgotten, for the lesson it holds out to confident security and ill-judged procrastination.

At the distance of thirty-four years from the period of the transaction, at the close of an uniformly successful campaign, in which victory seems to have belonged to the arms of the United States, it is difficult to

(1) MABLY. Gen. Armstrong has adopted the quotation as the "Preface" to his "Notices of the War of 1812," (New York, Geo. Dearborn, 1836, 1840,) where it is credited (by the mistake of the printer) to MABBY.

realize that forty-five hundred infantry, without artillery, and under the effects of a climate deadly to European constitutions, should have marched fifty miles into a country peculiarly adapted for defence, whose inhabitants had heretofore been celebrated for bravery, and their skill in irregular warfare, destroyed with every degree of wanton barbarism the capitol of the country, and been permitted to retire unmolested to their shipping, to prosecute a new enterprise undertaken upon the impunity which attended such extraordinary success.

War was declared against Great Britain on the 18th of June, 1812; and so early as December of that year notice was received in the United States from Bermuda, that a British squadron had arrived at that place, having on board a considerable body of troops, with the requisite munitions, including Congreve rockets, destined for the attack of the southern cities of the United States.(1) On the 4th of February following two ships of the line, three frigates, and some smaller vessels of this squadron entered the mouth of the Chesapeake, and came to anchor in Hampton Roads. The destruction of private property, the capture of negroes,(2) and the burning of Frederick, Georgetown, Havre de Grace, and Frenchtown, and the exercise of almost incredible barbarities on the defenceless inhabitants, followed the arrival of this force,(3) which was afterwards increased to seven ships of the line and thirteen frigates, having on board four thousand infantry. An attempt was made by this armament to take Norfolk, on the 22d of June, 1813; but the timely organization of a small

(1) Palmer, Hist. Reg., vol. ii. 83.

(2) 700 were at Bermuda in Jan., 1814. Nat. Int., March 17, 1814; Niles' Reg., vol. vi. 45.

(3) Armstrong, Not. of War, vol. ii. p. 46. Macon, Report on the Barbarities of the Enemy, 1813.

militia force, and their efficient resistance, with the aid of a handful of seamen and marines, proved sufficient to defeat the attack and repulse the enemy with signal loss,(1) and they proceeded to North Carolina, to repeat at Ocracoke and Portsmouth the revolting acts which they had previously perpetrated in Maryland. The attitude of the defenders of those two places induced Admiral Cockburn to return to the Chesapeake, to resume his system of plunder, the particulars of which need not be enumerated.(2)

So early as March the 1st, 1814, Admiral Cockburn, with one seventy-four, two frigates, a brig and a schooner, arrived in Lynnhaven Bay, and began the usual system of capture and plunder.(3) Their presence was continually taken notice of, and published in the city of Washington,(4) where the probable result of the campaign in Europe, which soon left at the disposal of the British government a large body of troops then serving in France, was publicly known, and seems to have excited neither attention, remark,(5) nor preparation. Soon after, the fact was announced that 4000 troops, said to be destined for the United States,(6) had, on the 20th of January, arrived at Bermuda, where the preparations for their successful action were going on with the knowledge of every member of the cabinet.(7)

(1) Palmer, Hist. Reg., vol. ii. p. 86.

(2) One of his exploits was the plundering and burning, on the 27th Nov., 1813, at St. George's Island, the cottage of a poor man, whose *daughter* was twice fired at by one of the party.—Niles' Reg., vol. v. p. 219.

(3) Nat. Int., March 7, 1814. (4) Ibid., March 11, 1814.

(5) Ibid.; and see Nat. Int., March 23, 1814, postscript, April 18, 1814; 9th May postscript.

(6) Nat. Int., March 17, 1814.

(7) The Armida and Lacedemonian frigates, two schooners, a brig, and the Albion and Dragon, seventy-fours, were in the Bay on the 16th March, and placed three buoys.—Nat. Int., March 22, 1814.

The "shadows of coming events" grew stronger as the events themselves drew nearer; and the intelligence from France, little heeded, it would seem, soon became distinct and positive([1])—confirmation arrived from time to time, as later intelligence was received of designs, the news of which served to fill a column in the government newspaper, but seems to have brought no warning to those who were so soon to suffer.([2]) One individual, indeed, like Cassandra, prophesied in vain. The views pointed out by him were fully justified by the events,([3]) and are in strong contrast with the inclination, apparent in the neighborhood of danger, to treat as unworthy of belief that which should have operated as warning.([4]) Islands in the Chesapeake were forcibly occupied, hospitals and fortifications erected; but to the nation, under the editorial head of the government journal, it was said,([5]) "We have no idea of his" (the enemy then at Blackstone's Island) "attempting to reach the vicinity of the Capitol; and if he does, we have no doubt he will meet such a reception as he had a sample of at Craney Island. The enemy knows better than to trust himself abreast of, or on this side of Fort Washington."([6]) At the time of this luckless boast the enemy

([1]) Nat. Int., March 28, 1814, postscript. See Ibid., March 30, 1814, "Late Foreign News;" 6000 troops were daily looked for.

([2]) Ibid., April 5, 1814. 6000 men destined for the southern states. On the 6th April the enemy in the Chesapeake were reinforced (Ibid., April 12, 1814) by two sail of the line. The same statement from a deserter.—Ibid., April 30, 1814.

([3]) "Americanus to the Military of the District of Columbia," Ibid., 6th and 11th of April, 1814.

([4]) Ibid., April 23, 1814. "Idle Rumor,"—that Admiral Cochrane had arrived with 5000 troops, Norfolk, April 16. See the "Ode on the National Apathy," Ibid., Sept. 20, 1814.

([5]) Ibid., May 7, 1814.

([6]) Which afterwards, (Aug. 27, 1814,) without any attempt at defence, was abandoned and destroyed on the approach of the enemy. "Report of the Comm. appointed to Inquire into the Causes, &c., of the Invasion of Washington," p. 328;

had been in the Potomac for a week, and by their movements harassed the militia of St. Mary's County, called out under a law which the chief magistrate of Maryland pronounced to be "a dead letter,"(1) and two days afterwards intelligence was received that the allies were in Paris.(2)

Of the actual condition of the country on the Chesapeake the enemy were fully aware. They received the newspapers,(3) they were continually receiving negroes(4) well acquainted with every locality,(5) and spies, it was well understood, "passed daily in and out of Washington, and through the country."(6) The administration knew these things, which were published at the seat of government, in the official journal, to which reference is made as the evidence of their occurrence. The encouragement given to an enemy, by such a state of affairs, to proceed from one enterprise to another more hardy, may be readily imagined, as well as the suffering and loss to individuals, and the national honor, from acts, which either no means existed to pre-

a hastily prepared and not very intelligible production, chiefly valuable for the Documents in the Appendix.—See Nat. Int., Nov. 30, 1814. The attention of Virginia to the defence of her seaboard seems to have been early awakened. See the account of the "Mountaineers" who marched to Norfolk between the 31st of March and 2d of May, 1814. Ibid., May 9, 1814; June 27, 1814.

(1) Nat. Int., May 16, 1814. As it turned out to be subsequently.—See "District Orders," Aug. 13, 1814. Ibid., Aug. 16, 1814.

(2) Ibid., May 18, 1814. (3) Ibid., June 6, 1814.

(4) Scott's (capt. R. N.) Rec. of a Naval Life, vol. iii. p. 118. See the effect it had upon the negroes at Fredericktown, Md. Nat. Int., Aug. 24, 1814, under the head of "THE LITTLE PLOT."

(5) Scott, vol. iii. p. 76. Lond., 1834.

(6) Nat. Int., July 23, 1814. "The enemy was conducted through the city (after the battle of Bladensburg) by a former resident of the city, who, with other detected traitors, is now in confinement."—Niles' Reg., vol. vi. p. 446. See the Letter of R. Rush, Esq., Nat. Int., Oct. 3, 1814. An agent for British prisoners, Col. Barclay, was allowed to reside at Bladensburg. Gen. Ross's Despatch, Palmer's Hist., vol. iv. p. 149.

vent,(1) or which were attempted to be resisted with inadequate forces, hastily drawn together, to "commit many blunders" upon the spur of the occasion.(2)

Very soon, however, the same official gazette, which contained the President's proclamation in answer to Admiral Cochrane's declaration that the whole Atlantic coast of the United States was in a state of blockade, contained also a paragraph, taken from a London paper of the 20th of April, announcing that "a number of the largest class of transports were fitting out, with all possible speed, at Portsmouth, as well as all the troop ships at that port, for the purpose, it was supposed, of going to Bordeaux, to take the most effective regiments in Lord Wellington's army to America;(3) and the next day's paper stated the arrival of a cartel from Bermuda at New York, on the 28th of June, bringing intelligence that she had "left at Bermuda a fleet of transports, with a large force on board, to sail in one or two days for some port in the United States—probably for the Potomac."(4)

Such intelligence was not entirely without its effect upon the long-continued apathy of the administration.

(1) "For five miles round we have no arms."—Dorsey's Letter, (Nat. Int., June 20, 1814,) giving an account of the attack on Benedict. Six days after (June 26) *official* notice was received of the pacification of Europe. Armstrong, Not. of War of 1812, p. 127.

(2) See Col. Wadsworth's Letter from the camp at St. Leonard's, June 26, Nat. Int., June 29, 1814. Letter from an Eye-witness, Ibid., July 7, 1814. Statement from T. P. Andrews' Journal, Ibid., July 9, 1814.

(3) Nat. Int., June 30, 1814. The expedition sailed June 2d. Gleig's Camp. British Army at Washington, p. 44.

(4) Nat. Int., July 1, 1814. The same paper stated that the War Department, in consequence of the retreat of the enemy from the *waters of the Patuxent*, had directed the militia of the District to return home, and that the cavalry had arrived and been dismissed. The governor of *Virginia* had issued orders for *twenty* regiments to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's notice, to repel invasion. Four more were subsequently called upon. Ibid., July 4, 1814.

The following notice to those deeply concerned in effective measures made its official appearance.

WASHINGTON CITY,

FRIDAY, JULY 8.

"DEFENSIVE MEASURES,

We understand, are already arranged by the War Department, to guard against and repel the depredations of the enemy on the shores of the waters adjacent to this district. It is said that a camp of two thousand regular troops, of whom two hundred are to be dragoons, is to be established at some point between the Patuxent and Potomac, so as to be able to send out, at the shortest notice, detachments to any point invaded or menaced on either river. Requisitions of militia, it is also said, are to be held in readiness to aid this force in repelling any attack on this city of a more formidable character, if attempted. These measures cannot but afford much satisfaction to the people of this district, and of the adjoining country, as it will relieve them from the liability to perform military service, except on really urgent occasions."(1)

Properly carried out, such a plan would have ensured safety;(2) and it can hardly be said to have been too soon

(1) Nat. Int., July 8, 1814. The "General Orders" issued from the adjutant general's office at Richmond, (Va.,) appeared the next day, calling on the regiments designated to be ready, "as the enemy, inflated with the splendid successes in Europe, would omit no exertion or preparation to make the state feel his strength." Ibid., July 9, 1814. The sailing from Bermuda of four ships of the line, with troops on board, previously to the 16th of June, and that Admiral Cochrane, with four more sail of the line, and several frigates, &c., with troops, were to depart from the same place, for the American coast, on the 20th of June, is stated in the Nat. Int. of July 12, 1814. A capital plan of defence, by "Americanus," appears in the Nat. Int. of July 14, 1814.

(2) This is substantially the plan proposed by the President to the cabinet on the

determined upon, for on the 14th of July, thirteen sail of the enemy's vessels were ascending the Bay, in time to reach the Patuxent that night,(1) and nine sail had come into Lynnhaven Bay on the 12th of July, supposed to be a reinforcement, with Admiral Lord Cochrane on board.(2) It is not to be concealed that, whatever alarm the inhabitants of the District may have felt, the War Department treated the matter very lightly.(3)

In the order of events the inquiry presents itself—what measures were taken to form "the camp" of regulars, and to call for the auxiliary aid of militia? On the 2d of July, 1814, the 10th Military District was created. It was composed of the State of Maryland, the District of Columbia, and that part of Virginia lying between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers; the command of it was assigned to Brig. Gen. Winder of the United States Army,(4) and a requisition for 93,500 men, was made upon the several States,(5) "to be organized and held in readiness for immediate service under the laws of the 28th of February, 1795, and 18th of April, 1814." Upon paper all this has a formidable appearance; but the appointment of a general, unless a proper military staff is furnished him, and efficient troops given to him, is a very unnecessary ceremony. There were few re-

1st of July, Rep. of Comm., p. 6, and stated by Col. Monroe, and confirmed by Gen. Armstrong, Rep. of Comm., 289, 290. See the account of the state of the militia of the District, Nat. Int., July 18, 1814, "LOCAL DEFENCE."

(1) Nat. Int., July 16, 1814.

(2) Ibid., July 18, 1814. Letter from Norfolk, dated July 12; at that place they were "prepared to receive them."

(3) Ibid., July 15, 1814. See the statement, Scott's Rec. of a Naval Life, vol. iii. p. 239.

(4) Gen. Orders, Adj. and Insp. General's office, 2d July. Nat. Int., July 6, 1814.

(5) Appendix, No. 1. Nat. Int., July 11, 1814. It states expressly, that it was "not known with certainty that any particular point or points would be the objects of attack."

gular troops within the power of the government—the most numerous body which had recently been within or near the District, 500 men of the 10th infantry, under Lt. Col. Clinch, "a body of stout, active young men, enlisted in North Carolina, which had been encamped near Washington for several weeks," were marched away to the northern frontier on the 13th of June, in the midst of the alarm of an expected attack.(1) In strictness, two detachments of the 36th and 38th infantry, and a small detachment of artillery, amounting, in the whole, to 330 men,(2) were all that could be said to be at their disposal at the time that the 10th Military District was created, nor was this great deficiency remedied in any degree before the troops were called into action.

No orders were issued by the War Department appointing an assistant adjutant general, assistant inspector general, or assigning to duty in the District any topographical engineers; and it is well known, that General Winder's greatest complaint was, that he had not the aid of this staff, without which the proper organization, equipment, and efficiency of troops is impossible, and that his time was occupied by an oppressive mass of detail, when he should have been at liberty to devote it to duties of a very different character.(3)

With regard to the militia force which "it was con-

(1) Nat. Int., June 18, 1814. The notice of their departure is immediately under the account of the alarm occasioned by the report of the burning of Benedict and Lower Marlborough.

(2) Report of Committee, p. 144. The garrisons of Forts M'Henry, Severn, and Washington, are, of course, not included; they amounted to 282 men, who could not be withdrawn from those forts.

(3) He urged it on the Department, (Letter 9th July, 1814, Appendix, No. 2,) but though promised on the 12th of July, (Appendix, No 3,) it was the 10th of August following before Mr. Hite, who received his orders on the 9th from the War Department, reported himself. Letter 10th Aug. 1814, Appendix, No. 4.

templated to hold in readiness" in the neighboring states, "to march without delay in case of necessity," it is obvious, that its usefulness would depend on the nature of the force called for, and its state of preparation and fitness for service when brought to the field. The requisition of the War Department of the 4th July, 1814, upon the several states was for artillery and infantry only, cavalry—an absolutely necessary species of force, in the event to be provided against—was entirely omitted.(1) Nor does the detail furnished to the Governors of Pennsylvania, Maryland, or Virginia, indicate that riflemen, the most effective troops against an invading army, were to form any portion of the force called for.(2) The requisition on the Governor of Pennsylvania was *ten* days in reaching Harrisburg;(3) and under date of July 25, 1814, the Secretary of the Commonwealth points out, to the Secretary at War, the reasons which existed in the way of complying with the requisition, showing clearly that no aid was to be expected from that state, and his letter of the 27th August following confirms his first statement.(4) In Virginia the object of the requisition seems to have been understood as a call to repel sudden invasion which might fall upon the State, and the Deputy Adjutant General informs the Secretary at War, on the 14th July, 1814,(5) that such previous preparation had been made for that purpose, that it was "believed that the object of the requisition had been anticipated." The Secretary at War,

(1) Gen. Winder, in his letter to the Governor of Pennsylvania of the 17th July, wishes as *many of the militia as possible to be riflemen.* The Governor of Pennsylvania, in the detail accompanying his "General Orders" of the 22d July, 1814, specifies that "deficiencies of *artillery* must be supplied by equal numbers of *infantry*," and that "*rifle corps* will be received in lieu of *infantry*." Aurora, July 29, 1814.

(2) Appendix, No. 1.

(3) Sec. Boileau to Gen. Armstrong, July 14, 1814, Appendix, No. 5.

(4) Appendix, No. 6.

(5) Appendix, No. 7.

in reply, under date of July 18, 1814, states to the Governor of Virginia, that the arrangements and preparations made, could "not be considered as fulfilling the views of the President;" and "that 2000 of the quota of Virginia will be put at the disposition of Gen. Winder, as commanding this District."(1) The Governor of Maryland, under date of the 29th July, 1814, in answer to the requisition, shows how little reliance was to be placed on aid from that state, either as to time or numbers.(2)

It cannot have escaped the reader, that the requisition on the Governors of the States was for militia "to be held in readiness for *immediate* service. With that object this force was to be placed at the disposition of the government, in accordance with the plan suggested by the President to the Cabinet on the 1st of July, 1814,(3) and that when the quotas were organized and completed, and the places of rendezvous reported by the state authorities, *who were to designate the species of forces, and their places of rendezvous,*(4) the forces so organized became subject to the orders of the Government, but not before. Previously to any intelligence from the several states, and acting as if the requisition had been complied with, the Secretary at War, on the 12th of July, informed the General commanding the District, that, "in case of actual or menaced invasion, he might call for a part, or the whole of the quota assigned to the State of Maryland, which shall have been organized and equipped under the aforesaid requisition,"

(1) Appendix, No. 8. The construction put by Gen. Gooch on this requisition is obviously the correct one.

(2) ~~Appendix, No.~~ Rep Inv Comm 182.

(3) Rep. Comm. of July, p. 6. "The convenient depôts of arms and military equipments to be established," do not seem to have been thought of afterwards.

(4) Appendix, No. 1.

and on the 17th(1) of the same month, with no additional information, the General was "authorized to draw from the quota of Virginia 2000 men, and from the quota of Pennsylvania 5000." The letters are given.(2)

War Department, July 12, 1814.

SIR:—You will receive herewith the copy of a circular letter addressed to the governors of certain states, requiring a body of militia to be organized, equipped, and held in readiness for future service.

In case of actual or menaced invasion of the District you command, you will call for a part, or for the whole of the quota assigned to the state of Maryland, which shall have been organized and equipped under the aforesaid requisition.

In performing this duty, you will be careful to avoid unnecessary calls, to proportion the call to the exigency, and to have inspected, without delay, all corps entering on service, to the end that men, who from any cause are unfit therefor, be promptly discharged, and that a due proportion, in all cases, be maintained between officers and privates.

I am sir, very respectfully,
Your obt. servant,
J. ARMSTRONG.

BRIGADIER GENERAL WINDER.

War Department, July 17, 1814.

SIR:—In addition to my circular letter of the 12th inst., which subjects to your call the quota of Maryland

(1) The letter, as printed in the Report of the Investigating Committee, is dated the 18th of July, (p. 125,) and so Gen. Armstrong states it: "Notices," &c., vol. ii. p. 128. Some of the pamphlets which arose out of the events of the day state it to have been the 17th, which is the true date, as appears from the *original* now before the writer.

(2) From the originals now before the writer.

militia, you are also authorized to draw from that of Virginia 2000 men, and from the quota of Pennsylvania 5000. The whole of the militia of the District of Columbia, amounting to about 2000, is kept in a disposable state, and subject to your orders.

I am, sir, very respectfully,
Your most obt. servant,
J. ARMSTRONG.

BRIGADIER GENERAL WINDER.

It is obvious, therefore, that the plan of the War Department was, to have recourse to "the militia of the District kept in a disposable state," and that in the event of actual invasion, the quotas of the states "held in readiness for *future* service," were to be called out on the spur of the occasion, but that no *present* disposition of them was to be made.(1)

The condition of the District of Columbia, and of the 10th Military District, therefore, from the 2d of July, 1814, up to the moment of actual invasion of the enemy on the 18th August, was utterly defenceless, and their helpless condition was well known to those who took advantage(2) of it to strike a blow that such a condition

(1) It is very clear that the commanding general of the 10th Military District had not any power at all over these quotas *until* organized and equipped under the requisition, which it was the duty of the War Department to see carried into effect; merely to make the requisition neither exhausted the power nor fulfilled the duty of that office.

(2) Gleig, Camp. at Washington, p. 162, (Am. ed.,) says, that the "capture of Washington was not the original end of the expedition; to destroy the (Barney's) flotilla was the sole object of the disembarkation; and but for the instigation of Admiral Cockburn, who accompanied the army, the capitol would probably have escaped. This statement is different from Scott's, (Rec. of Naval Life, vol. iii. 272,) who says that the capture of Washington *was* the object, and was to be masked by an attack on the flotilla. See his statement (pp. 271, 272) as to the information gained of the resources of the Americans, "and the character of the troops likely to be brought into contact with the forthcoming expedition." Cochrane's despatches agree with Scott.—Palmer's Hist. Reg., vol. iv. 137.

invited. The force, by which the hazardous expedition was undertaken, amounted to but 4500 men,(1) including sailors and armed negroes, entirely destitute of cavalry, and dragging with them, by hand, one six-pounder, and two three-pounder grasshoppers. The distance to march was upwards of forty miles, through a country intersected with streams, and covered with woods, during excessively sultry weather, the effect of which, upon men who had been relaxed by being long cooped up in ships, and unused to carry their arms, was so extremely severe,(2) that the second day the army marched but six miles, during which, says one of the number, "a greater number of soldiers dropped out of the ranks, and fell behind from fatigue, than I recollect to have seen in any march in the Peninsula of thrice its duration."(3) It required very little military knowledge to dispose of an invading force of such a strength under such circumstances. To obstruct the roads by felling trees across them, and breaking down the bridges; to hover round the flanks and rear guard of the advancing corps, continually harassing them by a fire of musketry and rifles; a succession of attacks on the advance whenever a stream was to be crossed, or fallen trees to be removed or avoided; and occasionally a

(1) Gleig, Camp. at Washington, 96, 97. The infantry was the 4th, 21st, 44th, and 85th.—Scott, (Rec. of Naval Life,) p. 272. The "Brigade Orders" found near the exploded well at Greenleaf's Point, where Capt. Blanchard, of the Royal Engineers, was killed, are printed in a pamphlet entitled "An Inquiry respecting the Capture of Washington, by Spectator," Feb. 1816, attributed to Gen. Armstrong, (p. 22.) They confirm the account. Col. Monroe states that Col. Beall, an old revolutionary officer, who viewed the column, estimated the enemy's force at between 4 and 5000 men.—Rep. Inv. Com., 65.

(2) Scott (Rec. of Naval Life, vol. iii. p. 261) says, "the thermometer ranged from 84 to 90 degrees."

(3) Gleig, Camp. at Washington, p. 102. Twelve were buried at Bladensburg without a wound.—Niles' Reg., vol. vi. 443.

shell from a howitzer, would have obliged them to surrender at discretion.(1)

The time occupied in reaching Washington was five days, and during the march the troops halted three hours at Nottingham, and eight hours at Marlborough.(2) The retreat occupied more than four days, during the first of which there was a halt from seven in the morning till noon, rendered imperative by the state of excessive fatigue of the men from the march of the night before, in which they would have fallen an easy conquest to a small body of resolute men acquainted with the country—but no one was at hand even to harass them.(3)

We have, too, the express acknowledgment of one who was an actor in the battle of Bladensburg, and a competent judge,(4) that "had the Americans been better troops, and in a higher state of discipline," the consequence of hurrying the British into action, after a long and toilsome march, "as was done, must have been fatal."

The plan of the President, therefore, it is abundantly clear, was well devised, and would have been attended with perfect success, if carried into proper operation;—two thousand, or even one thousand *regular* troops, encamped and instructed, and ten thousand organized militia and volunteers, properly equipped, and brought into the field in time to receive sufficient instruction to act in concert against the enemy, and held in readiness

(1) Gleig (Camp. at Washington, p. 157) admits that such must have been the result of such a mode of resistance.

(2) Gleig, Camp. at Washington, p. 151.

(3) Dr. Bean, of Marlborough, instigated the inhabitants of that place to arms, and they killed some stragglers, and made some prisoners, afterwards rescued by the troopers of the enemy, who returned for the purpose. Ibid., 149.

(4) Gleig, who was wounded.—Palmer, Hist. Reg., vol. iv. 151.

so to do, would have been amply sufficient for the purpose.

It is now in order to review the course pursued by the commanding general, to whose charge the 10th Military District was confided, and the use of the means which were furnished to him a short time previous to the battle. On the 9th of July, 1814, he addressed, to the Secretary at War, a letter, which is given entire. The view of the events to come is as accurate as if written *after* the occurrences had taken place.

BALTIMORE, *July* 9, 1814.

SIR:—The objects of the command which has been conferred on me, have, consequently, since I received it, occupied my serious consideration.

The utmost regular force which, it is probable, can, in the present state of affairs, be placed at my command, including the force necessary for garrisoning the several forts, will not exceed 1000 men, and some weeks will necessarily elapse before the detachments from Virginia and Carlisle will reach my District: the detachments of the 36th and 38th are, therefore, the only troops that I can expect to have in the field in the meantime; and when those other detachments join, the utmost force will be 7 to 800.

In conversation with you at Washington, I understood the idea, at present entertained relative to the auxiliary militia force proposed for the District, to be, that it shall be drafted and designated, but that no part of it is to be called into the field until the hostile force, now in the Chesapeake, shall be reinforced to such an extent as to render it probable that a serious attack is contemplated.

The enemy's fleet has now spent more than a twelvemonth in the waters of the Chesapeake; and during that time has visited almost every river falling into the bay; and must be presumed to have such accurate information, that whatever expedition may be destined to these waters, will have a definite object, to the execution of which, on its arrival, it will proceed with the utmost promptitude and dispatch. Should Washington, Baltimore, or Annapolis, be their object, what possible chance will there be of collecting a force, after the arrival of the enemy, to interpose between them and either of those places? They can proceed, without dropping anchor, to within three hours' rowing and marching of

Baltimore; within less of Annapolis; and upon arriving off South River, can debark, and be in Washington in a day and a half. This celerity of movement on their part is not probable, owing to adverse weather, and other causes; but if the enemy has been active, while in our waters, to acquire a knowledge of our country, of which there can be no doubt, and should be favored with weather on the arrival of reinforcements, he can be in Washington, Baltimore, or Annapolis, in four days from entering the Capes. But allowing liberally for all causes of detention, he can be in either of those places in ten days from his arrival. What time will this allow us to hear of his arrival, to disseminate through the intricate and winding channels the various orders to the militia, for them to assemble, have their officers designated, their arms, accoutrements, and ammunition delivered, the necessary supplies provided, or for the commanding officer to learn the different corps and detachments, so as to issue orders with the promptitude and certainty so necessary in active operations? If the enemy's force should be strong, which, if it come at all, it will be, sufficient numbers of the militia could not be warned and run together, even as a disorderly crowd, without arms, ammunition, or organization, before the enemy would already have given his blow.

Would it not, then, be expedient to increase the force of my command, by immediately calling out a portion of the militia; so that, by previously selecting the best positions for defence, and increasing, as far as possible, the natural advantages of these positions, the advance of the enemy might be retarded, his force crippled, and time and opportunity thus gained for drawing together whatever other resources of defence might be competent to resist the enemy? The small force of regulars will be incompetent to accomplish any material works at favorable positions for strengthening the defences, and to supply the various vidette parties, which it will be necessary to station on the prominent points of the bay, to watch the enemy, and communicate his movements with the greatest possible despatch. Allow me, sir, respectfully to propose that 4000 militia be called out without delay: I propose to station these in equal proportions in the most eligible positions between South River and Washington, and in the vicinity of Baltimore. Baltimore could not be aided by a force stationed between South River and Washington, unless a force were on the spot to retard the advance of the enemy until it could arrive, and so with respect to the force at Baltimore in co-operating with that intended to defend Washington. Each could assist the other if of this magnitude, and it appears to me, that, with materially less means actually in the field, and ready for instant action,

no hope can be entertained of opposing the enemy in assailing either of those places.

I shall proceed to Annapolis to-morrow, and have but little doubt that the Executive of Maryland will cordially co-operate in affording such means as it may be deemed advisable to call for, and I beg you will permit me to procure this, or such other militia force as the President may think proper immediately to be called out.

I sent an order from Washington for the detachments of the 36th and 38th to move up to the head of South River, where I propose to meet them, and fix upon the most eligible spot for the camp intended to defend Washington.

You will please, therefore, to direct any communications to me to Annapolis, which will enable me to make the requisite arrangements with the Executive of Maryland at once.

I have the honor to be,

With great respect,

Sir, your obedient servant,

W. H. WINDER,

Brigadier General commanding 10th Military District.

HON. JOHN ARMSTRONG,

Secretary at War.

He proceeded to examine personally the condition of the Military District. On the 12th of July he was at Baltimore, the 16th at Marlborough, the 17th at Nottingham, the 22d at Marlborough, the 23d at the Woodyard, the 25th at Fort Washington, the 26th at Port Tobacco, the 27th at Piscataway, on the 1st of August at Washington, on the 4th at Tobacco, on the 6th at Washington, and on the 8th at Baltimore.(1)

To his letter of the 9th of July no answer was returned by the Secretary at War.(2) The plan of form-

(1) Rep. Inv. Comm., 138, 139.

(2) This letter is not referred to by Gen. Armstrong in his statement to the committee, (Rep., p. 74,) nor in the "Spectator" pamphlet, nor in his "Notices of the War." It has been printed by the Committee of Investigation.—Report, p. 98. The assistant Inspector General acknowledged its receipt, and its submission to the Secretary at War, but not a word is said about the object of it.—Appendix, No. 9.

ing "a considerable camp, or rather camps, *immediately* to be formed in such positions as would best enable them to succor Washington, Baltimore, and the intermediate coasts, from whence those places would, if at all, be assailed, and more particularly that magazines and depots of every necessary article be commenced *without delay*," had previously been urged upon his attention by Gen. Winder in a letter to him of the 30th June, 1814, upon receiving information from him of the intention of the President to assign to that officer the command of the Military District about to be created.(1)

What the reasons were which influenced the Secretary at War to disregard these views of a mode of defence, it is impossible, upon his own authority, to say, as he returned no answer in which they were discussed, modified, or controverted, nor has he, at any subsequent period, revealed them. It would seem, from the evidence which is attainable, that his own views were not in accordance with them at all, if his forbearance to act in conformity with them, or carry them out, which can be explained only by his having a decided opinion, be regarded as evidence. As stated to himself by Gen. Winder, in the letter of the 9th of July, the Secretary's idea "relative to the auxiliary militia force proposed for the District" was, "that it be drafted and designated, but that no part of it be called into the field until the hostile force now in the Chesapeake shall be reinforced to such an extent as to render

(1) "Remarks, &c., on a Pamphlet, &c., by Spectator," p. 8. Balt., 1816.—According to the letter of Gen. Armstrong to the Committee of Investigation, (Rep., p. 77,) "an order was taken to assemble a corps, and form a camp at such point between Washington and Baltimore as might be selected by the commanding general,"—of which the requisition of the 4th of July, 1814, was the *full execution*. See "Spectator," Pamp., p. 8. This order, he says, (letter of Oct. 17, 1814,) was "conformably to the opinions (therein detailed) given in Cabinet Council, July 1, 1814." The same view of the "*execution*, so far as it depended on the War Department," is taken in the Notices of the War of 1812, vol. ii. p. 128.

it probable that a serious attack is contemplated;" and his letter to the general of the 12th July, 1814, inclosing a copy of the requisition of the 4th, speaks of the force as that "of a body of militia to be organized and equipped, and held in readiness for *future service.*(1) In exact accordance with such views was the opinion of the Secretary, stated to Gen. Winder previously to the 9th of July, as an objection to calling out any of the militia, and forming a camp, "that the most advantageous mode of using militia, was upon the spur of the occasion, and to bring them to fight as soon as called out."(2) An additional reason is to be found in the want of faith on the part of Gen. Armstrong that any attack would be made upon the Capital.(3)

The General, in answer to the Secretary, on the 16th of July, after giving a detail of the defenceless condition of a portion of his District, and making a variety of suggestions, adds that he fears "it will be in vain to look for any efficient aid upon a sudden call upon the militia."(4) He addressed him again on the 23d of July, and after asking to be informed whether "only the quota of the District [of Columbia] militia is to be

(1) The whole of the letter is given, (*ante*, p. 12,) as it will be again referred to. It is omitted in the "Communication of the War Department" to the Investigating Committee, though those of the 2d July and 18th [17th] July, 1814, are both given.—(Report, p. 98, 124.)

(2) Report of Investigating Committee, p. 136.

(3) Gen. Van Ness says, he treated the idea, repeatedly presented to him, "with indifference, at least, if not with levity."—Ibid., 289, 292. The statement of T. L. M'Kenney, (Reply to K. Armstrong's Assault, &c., p. 5,) and the admission of K. Armstrong, (Review of T. L. M'Kenney's Narrative, p. 6,) confirms Gen. Van Ness' statement. The same fact is stated by Gen. Wilkinson, Mem., vol. i. p. 751.—See the Letter of S. Pleasanton, Esq., Appendix, No. 10. That General Armstrong had long known the defenceless state of the Capital, see his reply to a Committee of the Senate, (June 10, 1813,) Am. State Papers, Class V., Military Affairs, vol. i. p. 383.

(4) Appendix, No. 10, (2).

drafted and placed at his disposal, or whether, on occasion, they are all liable to requisition," proceeds to observe to him, that "as that part of the Pennsylvania militia, assigned for his district, are remote, and could not be called out upon emergency, might it not be expedient to draw from remotest points, leaving that portion of the militia nearest the probable scene, to be called out on the spur of the occasion."(1) On the 25th July he made known the wretched state of Fort Washington,(2) and on the 27th, that about 1500 militia, called out under the authority of the state laws, and not under his command, were distributed from Cedar Point to Nottingham, and that the regulars (330 men) under his command were at Marlborough, between the enemy and *any possible approach to Washington.*(3) To few of these suggestions and calls did the War Department return any answer or orders, and those of the shortest and most unsatisfactory kind.(4) It seemed as if the paper requisition—about as effectual as a paper blockade—was all that that branch of the Government deemed it essential to furnish for the defence of the Capital. The additional mortification of knowing that there were means of defence within reach, not furnished to him, was also endured by the commanding general. On the 4th of August he was informed by the War Department, that Captain Nicholas, a very efficient officer, was relieved from the command of Fort Wash-

(1) Appendix, No. 11.

(2) Appendix, No. 12. One of the complaints was, "that for the water battery, five excellent 18 pounders, there was not a pound of ammunition." The Secretary at War stated to a Committee of the Senate, on the 12th July, 1813, that this fort and its covering work "had recently been put into a state of complete repair, are well furnished with heavy cannon, furnaces, &c., and are now occupied by a competent garrison."—See his Letter, Appendix, No. 19.

(3) Appendix, No. 13.

(4) To those of 25th and 27th July, Rep. Inv. Comm., p. 125.

ington, and the command given to another,(1) afterwards cashiered for misbehavior before the expected enemy in that very post, which he shamefully abandoned;(2) and that the object in so relieving him was, that he might go to Philadelphia for the purpose of organizing a company of recruits immediately, intended for the frontier.(3) On the same day a letter was written to him from New York, by Captain M'Keon,(4) who desired to serve under him with a company of artillery from the forces in New York harbor, where 400 artillerists were assembled, a part of whom could safely have been drafted for other services, as the militia of the State, ordered to be drafted for service, would supply their place; and the same remark applies to Captain Nicholas's company. Certainly the measure of taking 200 regulars from New York, and 100 from Philadelphia, would have added essentially to the means of safety, if ordered at once to Washington. As it had become evident that no force could be expected from distant points, the Secretary at War found it necessary to consider the militia of Baltimore, called out under a State requisition of the 24th of April, 1814, as part of the quota of 6000 men to be furnished under the requisition of July 4th, 1814, made by the United States. He gave no notice of this arrangement to General Winder, whose letter to him of the 13th of August, shows the actual state of destitution in which the arrangements of the War Department had left him;(5) and authority to take these forces, was received by letter from the Secretary, dated at Washington, August 16, 1814, and delivered the next day. On Friday, the 18th of August, it was known at Washing-

(1) Appendix, No. 14.
(2) Rep. Inv. Comm., 328.
(3) Appendix, No. 15.
(4) Appendix, No. 16.
(5) Appendix, No. 17.

ton, that the enemy was coming up the Bay in force; and the next day there was information of the determination on the part of the Admiral, "to dine in Washington on Sunday, after destroying the flotilla.(1)"

At this juncture the regular force stated, and relied upon, by the Secretary at War, at the Cabinet Council, amounting to about 1000 men, was found to consist of 330 men of the 36th and 38th regiments of infantry, and two troops of cavalry—125 men—under Lieut. Col. Laval.(2) One company of the 12th infantry, consisting of 80 men, shortly after arrived at Washington.(3)

The call of the War Department for the militia from General Samuel Smith's division of the militia of Maryland, put in motion the quota from the brigade of General Stansbury, who marched on the 20th of August from Baltimore, with 1353 men.(4) This force halted at the Stag Tavern on the evening of the 21st, and on the 22d advanced towards Bladensburg, near which place they encamped, and on the 23d commenced moving towards Marlborough, the orders of Gen. Winder being, to take a position on the road not far from that place. On the evening of the 23d, Lieut. Col. Sterret's command, consisting of the 5th Baltimore regiment of volunteers, Major Pinkney's(5) rifle battalion, and two companies

(1) Com. Barney's Letter, Appendix, No. 18.

(2) Rep. Inv. Comm., 144. The "two troops of dragoons" arrived on the 20th of August, raw recruits, just mounted, and utterly inefficient, (Laval's Statement, Rep. Inv. Comm., p. 236, 238,) and the "two companies" of the 10th regiment did not arrive at all. A "company of the 12th" reached Washington on the 22d of August, and joined General Winder in the evening—raw recruits, who received arms, &c., on their arrival. The garrison of Fort M'Henry was composed, in part, of the "two companies—167 effectives—of Sea Fencibles," who could not be spared from it. (Rep. Inv. Comm., p. 58, Div. Orders, 15th Sept., 1814.) Compare the account with the statement made by the Secretary at War, July 12, 1813, of the force "in readiness for the defence of Washington."—Appendix, No. 19.

(3) Rep. Inv. Comm., p. 146.

(4) Rep. Inv. Comm., 175.

(5) Minister to London.

(Myers' and Magruder's) of artillery, in all about 800 men, joined General Stansbury.(1) The fatigued state of Sterret's command induced General Stansbury to halt and remain during the night on the hill near Bladensburg. A false alarm, by which the command was roused, and kept under arms until after two o'clock in the morning of the 24th, together with other circumstances, added to the exhaustion and distress of the troops.(2) After making a movement towards Washington, General Stansbury's force was ordered by General Winder to return to Bladensburg, where they took post in the orchard near the mill; the artillery, consisting of six guns, being behind a small breastwork of earth, commanding the pass into the town, and the bridge southwest of it, which was also commanded by Pinkney's riflemen.

In the meantime it was ascertained by General Winder, that the enemy was proceeding towards Washington by the Bladensburg Road,(3) instead of moving on Annapolis, or Fort Washington, as his course for a time threatened, and he passed into the City of Washington that night over the bridge at the Eastern Branch. He had with him Commodore Barney, who joined him at the Old Fields, with the flotilla men and marines, amounting to about 500 men, Laval's dragoons, 125 in number, some volunteer cavalry, 260 strong, the 36th and 38th regiments of U. S. infantry, 330 men, the militia under Col. Hood, (6 or 700,) and the brigade of militia of the District, 1070 men,(4) commanded by

(1) Sterret's Report, Rep. Inv. Comm., p. 227.

(2) The provisions issued to them consisted of salt beef of an inferior quality, and old and musty flour.—(Stansbury's Report, Rep. Inv. Comm., p. 179.)

(3) The object of the enemy in turning towards Annapolis, was to keep the Americans in the dark as to his plan of operations.—Gleig, Camp. at Wash., p. 112.

(4) General Smith complained of great deficiency of camp equipage, the public

General W. Smith. These various bodies amounted in numbers to about 5100, "a mass suddenly assembled, without organization or discipline,"(1) and, with the exception of Commodore Barney and Major Peters, without any "officers with the least knowledge of service," and wearied and exhausted by sudden exertion, and toilsome marches, in very hot weather. Col. Minor's force of 600 is not included in this estimate, as they were not on the battle-ground, having been detained from taking part in the action, by the negligent, frivolous, and dilatory course pursued by the Secretary at War, and the persons of his department whose duty it was to furnish them with arms and ammunition.(2)

With 5000 men, assembled in time to organize them, and allow their officers to become acquainted with each other, and with his plan of operations, a general, acquainted as General Winder was, with the country through which his enemy had to penetrate, would undoubtedly have given a good account of him; but to oppose in pitched battle the undisciplined valor and exertions of the same men to that of an equal number of regular, veteran troops, could only be justified by absolute necessity—a necessity which existed on the 24th of August, 1814, the result of an improvident disregard on the part of the Secretary at War, of continual warning against coming evil, which he had the means of resist-

stores being exhausted, and many of his troops compelled thereby to sleep in the open field; of flints, 200 only could be obtained upon a requisition for 1000; the deficiency was supplied from private sources.—Rep. Inv. Comm., 202.

(1) The flotilla men and marines should be excepted.

(2) One very young man, who had charge of the armory, counted over again the flints after they had been counted by Col. Minor's officers, and so cautiously dealt out the stores, that the regiment was unable to get to the field in time.—See Col. Minor's Statement, Rep. Inv. Comm., 232.

ing and subduing, with honor to his country and credit to himself, but did not call them forth in time.

The best British account of the engagement, which took place(1) about noon, by an eyewitness, to whose relation of many particulars connected with the present inquiry, we have often had recourse, will render the position of the respective forces, and the action, very intelligible.(2)

"The hour of noon was approaching, when a heavy cloud of dust, apparently not more than two or three miles distant, attracted our attention. From whence it originated there was little difficulty in guessing, nor did many minutes expire before surmise was changed into certainty; for on turning a sudden angle in the road, and passing a small plantation, which obstructed the vision towards the left, the British and American armies became visible to one another. The position occupied by the latter was one of great strength, and commanding attitude. They were drawn up in three lines upon the brow of a hill, having their front and left flank covered by a branch of the Potomac, and their right resting upon a thick wood and a deep ravine. This river, which may be about the breadth of the Isis at Oxford, flowed between the heights occupied by the American forces, and the little town of Bladensburg. Across it was thrown a narrow bridge, extending from the chief street in that town to the continuation of the road, which passed through the very centre of their position; and its right bank (the bank above which they were drawn up) was covered with a narrow stripe of willows and larch trees, whilst the left was altogether bare, low, and exposed. Such was the general aspect of their position as at the first glance it presented itself; of which I must endeavor to give a more detailed account, that my description of the battle may be in some degree intelligible.

"I have said that the right bank of the Potomac was covered with a narrow stripe of willow and larch trees. Here the Americans had stationed strong bodies of riflemen, who, in skirmishing order, covered the whole front of their army. Behind this narrow plantation, again, the fields

(1) Gleig, Camp. at Wash., 119. He was a lieutenant in the 85th regiment.

(2) The abuse, vituperation, and ridicule (in prose and verse) with which the administration was attacked by its opponents, and by persons devoted to the enemy and opposed to the war, have never been equalled in the history of the country.

were open and clear, intersected, at certain distances, by rows of high and strong palings. About the middle of the ascent, and in the rear of one of these rows, stood the first line, composed entirely of infantry; at a proper interval from this, and in a similar situation, stood the second line; while the third, or reserve, was posted within the skirts of a wood, which crowned the heights. The artillery, again, of which they had twenty pieces in the field, was thus arranged: on the high road, and commanding the bridge, stood two heavy guns; and four more, two on each side of the road, swept partly in the same direction, and partly down the whole of the slope into the streets of Bladensburg. The rest were scattered, with no great judgment, along the second line of infantry, occupying different spaces between the right of one regiment, and the left of another; while the cavalry showed itself in one mass, within a stubble field, near the extreme left of the position. Such was the nature of the ground which they occupied, and the formidable posture in which they waited our approach; amounting, *by their own account*,(1) to nine thousand men, a number exactly doubling that of the force which was to attack them.

"In the mean time, our column continued to advance in the same order which it had hitherto preserved. The road conducted us for about two miles in a direction parallel with the river, and of consequence with the enemy's line; when it suddenly turned, and led directly towards the town of Bladensburg. Being of course ignorant whether this town might not be filled with American troops, the main body paused here, till the advanced guard should reconnoitre. The result proved that no opposition was intended in that quarter, and that the whole of the enemy's army had been withdrawn to the opposite side of the stream, whereupon the army was again put in motion, and in a short time arrived in the streets of Bladensburg, and within range of the American artillery. Immediately on our reaching this point, several of their guns opened upon us, and kept up a quick and well directed cannonade, from which, as we were again commanded to halt, the men were directed to shelter themselves as much as possible behind the houses. The object of this halt, it was conjectured, was to give the General an opportunity of examining the American line, and of trying the depth of the river; because at present there appeared to be but one practicable mode of attack, by crossing the bridge, and taking the enemy directly in front. To do so, however, exposed as the bridge was, must be attended with bloody consequences, nor could the delay of a few minutes produce any mischief which the discovery of a ford would not amply compensate.

"But in this conjecture we were altogether mistaken; for without al-

(1) Information derived from negroes.

lowing time to the column to close its ranks or to be formed by some of the many stragglers, who were now hurrying, as fast as weariness would permit, to regain their places, the order to halt was countermanded, and the word given to attack; and we immediately pushed on at double quick time, towards the head of the bridge. While we were moving along the street, a continued fire was kept up, with some execution, from those guns which stood to the left of the road; but it was not till the bridge was covered with our people that the two-gun battery upon the road itself began to play. Then, indeed, it also opened, and with tremendous effect; for at the first discharge almost an entire company was swept down; but whether it was that the guns had been previously laid with measured exactness, or that the nerves of the gunners became afterwards unsteady, the succeeding discharges were much less fatal. The riflemen likewise now galled us from the wooded bank, with a running fire of musketry; and it was not without trampling upon many of their dead and dying comrades, that the light brigade established itself on the opposite side of the stream.

"When once there, however, everything else appeared easy. Wheeling off to the right and left of the road, they dashed into the thicket, and quickly cleared it of the American skirmishers; who falling back with precipitation upon the first line, threw it into disorder before it had fired a shot. The consequence was, that our troops had scarcely shown themselves when the whole of that line gave way, and fled in the greatest confusion, leaving the two guns upon the road in possession of the victors.

"But here it must be confessed that the light brigade was guilty of imprudence. Instead of pausing till the rest of the army came up, they lightened themselves by throwing away their knapsacks and haversacks; and extending their ranks so as to show an equal front with the enemy, pushed on to the attack of the second line. The Americans, however, saw their weakness, and stood firm, and having the whole of their artillery, with the exception of those captured on the road, and the greater part of their infantry in this line, they first checked the ardor of the assailants by a heavy fire, and then in their turn, advanced to recover the ground which was lost.(1) Against this charge, the extended order of the British troops would not permit them to offer an effectual resistance, and they were accordingly borne back to the very thicket upon the river's brink; where they maintained themselves with determined obstinacy, repelling all attempts to drive them through it; and frequently following, to within a short distance of the cannon's mouth, such parts of the enemy's line as gave way.

(1) General Winder at the head of the 5th regiment.

"In this state the action continued till the second brigade had likewise crossed, and formed upon the right bank of the river; when the 44th regiment moving to the right, and driving in the skirmishers, debouched upon the left flank of the Americans, and completely turned it. In that quarter, therefore, the battle was won; because the raw militia-men, who were stationed there as being the least assailable point, when once broken could not be rallied. But on their right, the enemy still kept their ground with much resolution; nor was it till the arrival of the 4th regiment, and the advance of the British forces in firm array, to the charge, that they began to waver. Then, indeed, seeing their left in full flight, and the 44th getting in their rear, they lost all order, and dispersed, leaving clouds of riflemen to cover their retreat; and hastened to conceal themselves in the woods, where it would have been vain to follow them. The rout was now general throughout the whole line. The reserve, which ought to have supported the main body, fled as soon as those in its front began to give way; and the cavalry, instead of charging the British troops, now scattered in pursuit, turned their horses' heads and galloped off, leaving them in undisputed possession of the field, and of ten out of the twenty pieces of artillery.

"This battle, by which the fate of the American capital was decided, began about one o'clock in the afternoon, and lasted till four. The loss on the part of the English was severe, since, out of two-thirds of the army, which were engaged, upwards of five hundred men were killed and wounded; and what rendered it doubly severe was, that among these were numbered several officers of rank and distinction. Colonel Thornton who commanded the light brigade; Lieutenant-Colonel Wood commanding the 85th regiment, and Major Brown who had led the advanced guard, were all severely wounded; and General Ross himself had a horse shot under him. On the side of the Americans the slaughter was not so great. Being in possession of a strong position, they were of course less exposed in defending, than the others in storming it; and had they conducted themselves with coolness, and resolution, it is not conceivable how the day could have been won. But the fact is, that, with the exception of a party of sailors from the gun boats, under the command of Commodore Barney, no troops could behave worse than they did. The skirmishers were driven in as soon as attacked, the first line gave way without offering the slightest resistance, and the left of the main body was broken within half an hour after it was seriously engaged. Of the sailors, however, it would be injustice not to speak in the terms which their conduct merits. They were employed as gunners, and not only did they serve their guns with a

quickness and precision which astonished their assailants, but they stood till some of them were actually bayoneted, with fuses in their hands; nor was it till their leader was wounded and taken, and they saw themselves deserted on all sides by the soldiers, that they quitted the field. With respect to the British army, again, no line of distinction can be drawn. All did their duty, and none more gallantly than the rest; and though the brunt of the affair fell upon the light brigade, this was owing chiefly to the circumstance of its being at the head of the column, and perhaps, also, in some degree, to its own rash impetuosity. The artillery, indeed, could do little; being unable to show itself in presence of a force so superior; but the six-pounder was nevertheless brought into action, and a corps of rockets proved of striking utility.

"Our troops being worn down from fatigue, and of course as ignorant of the country, as the Americans were the reverse, the pursuit could not be continued to any distance. Neither was it attended with much slaughter. Diving into the recesses of the forests, and covering themselves with riflemen, the enemy were quickly beyond our reach; and having no cavalry to scour even the high road, ten of the lightest of their guns were carried off in the flight. The defeat, however, was absolute, and the army, which had been collected for the defence of Washington, was scattered beyond the possibility of, at least, an immediate reunion; and as the distance from Bladensburg to that city does not exceed four miles, there appeared to be no further obstacle in the way, to prevent its immediate capture."

It should be remembered, that the formation of the American lines was scarcely completed when the enemy appeared. Colonel Beale, who was on the right, had just arrived with his regiment of Maryland militia,(1) and taken post on a high ground, near the battery of Commodore Barney, which had been posted so as to command the bridge and the road by which the enemy approached.(2) To Barney's right extended the flotilla men and marines under Captain Miller, and on his left was Colonel Magruder's regiment (the 1st) of District militia; Lieut.-Col. Scott with the United States infantry, com-

(1) They had marched 16 miles that morning, and were taken into battle fatigued and exhausted.

(2) Rep. Inv. Com., 213.

posed of portions of the 36th, 38th, and 12th regiments, was in front of Magruder about one hundred yards, but his position was afterwards changed, because in the way of the guns of Major Peters's battery, and the men fell back and formed in line with Magruder's regiment. Peters's battery, (six six-pounders,) Davidson's light infantry and Stull's rifle corps(1) were thus in advance, and Colonel Cramer was posted still further in advance, in the woods on the right of the road, with his battalion of Maryland militia. The troops under Stansbury(2) were to the west of Bladensburg, in an orchard, and on the left of the road to Washington, and formed, together with Beal's command, the first line; their artillery was behind a small breastwork in front, and the infantry in the rear and to the left, to protect the position; the other corps which we have mentioned formed the second line.(3) The enemy first approached Stansbury's line, about half-past 12 o'clock, and their light troops were dispersed by the fire of the Baltimore artillery, and taking shelter behind the houses of the village and trees, began to concentrate towards the bridge, and press across it and the river. Pinkney's riflemen now opened a very brisk fire upon them, which, added to the artillery, occasioned them a severe loss of men. They passed the bridge, however, and having deployed into line, advanced on the artillery and riflemen, and compelled them to retreat, and join the troops of the first

(1) *Armed with muskets.* The conduct of Captain Stull and his company on a subsequent occasion is highly commended by Commodore Perry. Letter of Sept. 9th, 1814.—Palmer's Hist. Reg., vol. iv. p. 172 of Hist. Doc.

(2) They consisted of the 1st Baltimore regiment of militia, Lieut.-Col. Ragan, the 2d Baltimore regiment, Lieut.-Col. Schutz, the 5th Baltimore regiment, (volunteers,) Lieut.-Col. Sterrett, Pinkney's rifle battalion, and Myers's and Magruder's Companies of Artillery.

(3) The enemy deemed the arrangement and position described to be a "formidable posture."—Gleig, Camp. at Wash., 120.

line. Their advance was annoyed by Captain Burch's company of volunteer artillery, belonging to the city, and a small detachment near it, who opened a sharp cross-fire upon them. General Winder, who was on the left of the 5th regiment, ordered it to advance and sustain the artillery, which it did with great promptness, and opened a steady well-directed fire on the enemy, in which it was followed by Ragan's and Schutz's regiments forming the right and centre of the line. Some rockets thrown by the enemy, which passed very close over the heads of Ragan's and Schutz's regiments, created a panic in these raw troops, in action for the first time, and they broke. Their officers exerted themselves to rally them, in which they were aided by General Winder, who displayed great zeal, activity, and personal bravery; but their efforts were ineffectual, and both regiments were broken and dispersed, leaving the 5th regiment with its flanks exposed. This regiment, however, kept its place in line firmly, covered the retreat of Ragan's and Schutz's by a smart fire, and did not retreat till ordered by General Winder to do so, after the enemy had gained both its flanks. The first line having been dispersed, the left of the enemy's force advanced on the second line. Passing along the road in heavy column, they were encountered by the corps of militia under Colonel Cramer, whom they drove back after a short and sharp conflict, and who formed upon Beal's command, and their column displayed in the field on the right of the road, and became exposed to the fire of Peters's battery, which galled, but did not check their progress. The onward movement of the enemy brought them in front of Barney's position, where, for a moment, they made a halt; and then

pushed forward upon him, but received such a destructive discharge from an eighteen pounder, that the road was completely cleared of them; and a second and third attempt to advance was repulsed in the same effectual manner. To avoid the battery, the enemy turned to the left into a field, with the view to turn the right flank of the position, but the movement was promptly met by the marines under Captains Miller and Sevier, and the flotilla men acting as infantry, who charged them with such vigor that they broke the 85th and the 4th, or "King's Own," and pursued them until they got into a ravine, leaving their officers, Major Brown, Lieut.-Col. Wood, and Colonel Thornton, all severely wounded, in possession of the Americans. General Ross had a horse shot under him.(1) The dispersion of Stansbury's troops left the ground on the left of the flotilla force undefended; and the enemy, having pushed a body of two or three hundred men against the militia under Beale, who were posted in a strong position on the right of Barney, dispersed them, and the British light troops gained both his flanks, and the Commodore himself was wounded severely, and also some of his best officers. The drivers, too, of his ammunition wagons, had gone off with them, in the confusion of the retreat of the militia; and, deprived of their ammunition, the power to resist any longer ceased, and the flotilla men and marines effected their retreat in good order; but the Commodore's wound rendered him unable to move, and he was made prisoner. The behaviour of the flotilla men and marines excited the highest admiration on the part of the enemy. The writer to whose account we have often referred, and who was an eye-witness of the scene, says:—"Of the

(1) Gleig, Camp. at Wash., 125.

sailors, however, it would be injustice not to speak in the highest terms which their conduct merits; they were employed as gunners; and not only did they serve their guns with a quickness and precision which astonished their assailants, but they stood till some of them were actually bayoneted, with fuses in their hands, nor was it until their leader was wounded and taken, and they saw themselves deserted on all sides by the soldiers, that they quitted the field."(1)

The British account of the battle mentions "a body of cavalry which showed itself in one mass, within a stubble field, near the extreme left of the position." They consisted of 260 volunteer dragoons, under the command of Lieut.-Col. Tilghman, and 125 United States dragoons, under Lieut.-Col. Laval, all raw recruits. They did not "charge the British troops when scattered in pursuit" of the Americans, but "turned their horses' heads, and galloped off."(2) The truth is, that these troops were so raw, and of course inefficient, that the horses and men could not be brought to the charge.(3)

(1) Gleig, Camp. at Wash., 127, 128. But for the delay, Col. Minor's regiment might have been in time upon the ground, and have prevented the turning of Barney's flanks. It was the Commodore's opinion, that he could have held out against the British army if this strong fresh regiment had been with him in time.—Col. Minor's Letter, Appendix, No. 20. The account of the battle has been drawn up from the reports of the officers engaged in it, and others—made to the Investigating Committee, Palmer's Hist. Register, Niles's Register, and the newspapers at Washington and Baltimore, published about the time. The loss of the British, according to Gleig, was upwards of 500 men killed and wounded, but this account does not include those blown up at the Navy Yard, nor the desertions, which, according to a cotemporary writer in the Baltimore Federal Gazette, must have swelled the actual loss to 1100 men.

(2) Gleig, Camp. at Wash., 124. The British writers do not mention the well-known remarkable fact, that the President of the United States, (Mr. Madison,) and the heads of Department, were on the battle-field during a portion of the time of the action.

(3) Nat. Int., Sept. 14, 1814.

The loss of the Americans did not exceed 10 or 12 killed, and 40 wounded.

The great body of the American troops retreated after the battle towards Montgomery Court House; and there were, of course, no obstacles in the way of the enemy, who proceeded to march the portion of his army who had not taken an active part in the engagement, into the city of Washington.

It is a matter of history, and of lasting reproach to the British nation, that in violation of all the rules of civilized warfare, General Ross proceeded to destroy and lay waste the public buildings,(1) monuments, and property, including a valuable library, and some of the archives, in the most wanton manner, involving in their destruction many private dwellings and a great amount of private property.(2) The feeling to which these acts gave rise, not only in America, but in Europe,(3) induced British writers to offer excuses for the outrage. It has been alleged, that a flag of truce was sent into the city with terms, and that the party bearing it was fired upon from one of the houses, and the horse of General Ross, who accompanied them, was killed,(4) and that "so direct a breach of the law of nations" justified the subsequent atrocities. But these excuses are met by the fact, that on the 18th of August, 1814, Admiral Cochrane addressed a letter to Mr. Monroe, the Secretary of State, announcing his intention to "destroy and lay waste such towns and districts upon the coast as may be found assailable."(5) Admiral Cockburn, in his

(1) The Patent Office alone escaped.

(2) Particular pains were taken by Admiral ~~Cochrane~~ Cockburn to destroy the office of the "National Intelligencer."

(3) Palmer, Hist. Reg., vol. iv. p. 56. (4) Gleig, Camp. at Wash., p. 129.

(5) The letter is to be found in Palmer's Register, vol. iv. p. 181, Off. Doc. It was not delivered, however, till *seven* days after the destruction of the city.

official letter, describes being fired upon—"the General, myself, and some officers, advancing a short way past the first houses of the town, without being accompanied by the troops, the enemy opened a heavy fire of musketry from the Capitol, and two other houses; these were, therefore, almost immediately stormed by our people, taken possession of, and set on fire, after which the town submitted without further resistance."(1) Not one word is said of there being "a flag of truce" with the party. The dispatch of General Ross to Earl Bathurst is entirely silent on the subject;(2) he does not even mention being fired upon:—after describing the action at Bladensburg, and his arrival at Washington at 8 o'clock at night,(3) he says, "judging it of consequence to complete the destruction of the public buildings with the least possible delay, so that the army might retire without loss of time, the following buildings were consumed, the Capitol, &c.—The object of the expedition having been accomplished, &c." Positive testimony, indeed, exists, that the General and Admiral had halted to confer about the destruction of the Capitol, when the gun was fired that killed the General's horse. The fact was stated to John S. Skinner, Esq., agent for the exchange of prisoners, by Admiral Cockburn himself, soon after the event; he said not one word about the flag of truce, and did not attempt to justify the act, strongly condemned by Mr. Skinner, but on the contrary said, "he had, upon further reflection,

(1) Palmer's Hist. Reg., vol. iv. p. 144, Off. Doc.

(2) Palmer's Hist. Reg., vol. iv. p. 146, Off. Doc. General Armstrong states, that General Ross and ~~Cochrane~~ Cockburn, after entering the city with a small escort, visited the public buildings, set a price on their ransom, and dispatched an agent to open a negotiation with some competent American authority on the subject; the return of the messenger with a rejection of the terms, became the signal for destruction.—(Not. War of 1812, vol. ii. p. 131.)

(3) At which hour, in the latter part of the month of August, darkness prevails.

experienced much regret that it should have been done, and declared that if it were revocable it would not be repeated under similar circumstances."(1)

That such an event as we have described should have taken place without serious effects upon the public mind, cannot be supposed—inquiry and judgment upon the actors in it were necessary consequences.

The Secretary at War, on his return to Washington, found the public mind greatly excited against him, and some of his friends went so far as to say that the President was among those who intended to cast the responsibility of the disgrace at Bladensburg upon him.(2) He retired from office, after giving his reasons for the act to the public, in a letter dated September 3, 1814,(3) and never returned to public life. We are not aware that he ever sought any investigation, or asked for any inquiry on the part of Congress; his appeal was to the public and to history.(4)

The course of General Winder—who never lost the confidence of the Executive(5)—was that of an officer who felt that he had been hardly dealt with, and was unfortunate, not through his own fault. He took an active part in the military operations against the enemy at Baltimore, and on the 22d of September, 1814, was

(1) Gleig, Camp. at Wash., Appendix, p. 400. Am. ed., Philada. 1821.

(2) Letter, John Holmes, Esq., to General Armstrong, Oct. 15, 1814. K. Armstrong's Ex. of M'Kenney's Reply, p. 18. The writer of that pamphlet insists that there was a plot to remove General A. from office. See also "extracts of a letter from Gov. Decha to General Armstrong, Sept. 26, 1814. K. Armstrong's Review of M'Kenney's Narr., (1846.) See the Boston Patriot, Sept. 21, 1814. "Letter from a gentleman in Washington, Sept. 13, 1814."

(3) Balt. Patriot. Nat. Int., Sept. 18, 1814. It is also given, but without date, in K. Armstrong's Review of M'Kenney's Narr., (1846,) p. 13. Appendix, No. 21.

(4) His "Notices of the War of 1812," published, (1836, vol, i., 1840, vol. ii.,) may also be viewed in this light.

(5) Letters of [redacted] Adj.-Gen. Parker, Feb. 18, 1815, Appendix, No. 22. Letter of Mr. Madison, Sept. 15, 1834. Appendix, No. 23.

ordered to the army on the Niagara frontier, "where his services were deemed of importance."(1) He repaired there with the utmost celerity, though the investigation was going on which terminated in the Report to which we have so often referred, which did not decide upon the military question, inasmuch as the Committee were of opinion "that that belonged to a military tribunal."(2) The state of the affairs on the frontier gave him no opportunity to vindicate his fame at the head of regular troops, and he returned to Washington to urge the inquiry, by a competent military tribunal, of his conduct in the command of the 10th Military District. He had not ceased to demand this vindication from the moment that he found that attempts had been made, "and persevered in," to misrepresent his actions and injure his reputation. At his urgent instances a Court of Inquiry, of which Major-General Winfield Scott was president, was ordered(3) on the 21st of January, 1815, and their Report not only acquitted him with the highest honor, but established the propriety of the views he had given to the War Department when he took command of the 10th Military District, and of his subsequent conduct, by the sanction of the highest military authority. The President approved the Report, and on the 12th of March, 1815, General Winder was again assigned to the command of the 10th Military District,(4) and enjoyed the continued confidence of the Government.(5) He declined, however, to continue in the army,(6) and re-

(1) Orders of Sept. 22d, 1814. Appendix, No. 24.

(2) R. M. Johnson's Letter, 21st Dec., 1814, to General Winder.

(3) Orders of 25th Feb., 1815, Appendix, No. 25, which contain the warrant and finding of the court.

(4) Gen. Orders, March 12, 1815, Appendix, No. 26.

(5) Letter of Adj.-Gen. Parker, March 31, 1815, Appendix, No. 27.

(6) Letters of Gen. Winder and A. J. Dallas, May 24th and 29th, Appendix, No. 28.

turned to civil life, and the enjoyment of the respect and consideration of his fellow-citizens. His practice at the bar was extensive; he was elected to the Senate of Maryland, and upon offering himself as a candidate for Congress ten days before the election, and after many of his friends had pledged themselves to his opponent, Mr. M'Kim, was within fourteen votes of being elected. The demonstrations of public respect upon his death, exhibited in the funeral honors paid to him, exceeded those which had ever been accorded to a private citizen.(1)

It is not foreign to our design to observe, that great as was the obloquy attempted to be thrown upon the efforts of the Americans at Bladensburg by some of the writers of their *own* country, who seemed to forget the difference between a force of hastily assembled citizens, and veteran troops, led by officers of experience, and using novel implements of war,(2) the estimation in which the exploit was held by the enemy should be taken into the account. It was certainly no trifling victory for which the thanks of Parliament were voted to those who achieved it, and which procured for the fallen General who led them, a monument in Westminster Abbey, among the most honored of Britain—which augmented the armorial bearings of his family, and authorized his descendants forever to style themselves "Ross of Bladensburg."

(1) Baltimore Patriot, May 25, 1824.

(2) The confusion created among some of the best troops of France at the battle of Leipsic, by a rocket brigade, is well known to military men.—Palmer, Hist. Reg., vol. iv. p. 40.

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

War Department, July 12, 1814.

SIR—You will receive herewith the copy of a circular letter, addressed to the governors of certain States, requiring a body of militia to be organized and equipped, and held in readiness for future service.

In case of actual or menaced invasion of the District you command, you will call for a part, or for the whole of the quota assigned to the State of Maryland, which shall have been organized and equipped under the aforesaid requisition.

In performing this duty you will be careful to avoid all unnecessary calls, to proportion the call to the exigency, and to have inspected, without delay, all corps entering on service, to the end that men, who from any cause are unfit therefor, be promptly discharged, and that a due proportion, in all cases, be maintained between officers and privates.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your ob't servant,

J. ARMSTRONG.

BRIGADIER GENERAL WINDER.

War Department, July 4, 1814.

SIR—The late pacification in Europe offers to the enemy a large disposable force, both naval and military, and with it the means of giving to the war here, a character of new and increased activity and extent.

Without knowing with certainty that such will be its application, and still less, that any particular point or points will become objects of attack, the President has deemed it advisable, as a measure of precaution, to strengthen ourselves on the line of the Atlantic, and (as the principal means of doing this will be found in the militia) to invite the executives of certain States to organize and hold in readiness, for immediate service, a corps of ninety-three thousand five hundred men, under the laws of 28th February, 1795, and 18th of April, 1814.

The enclosed detail will show your excellency what, under this requisition, will be the quota of As far as volunteer uniform companies can be found, they will be preferred.

The expediency of regarding (as well in the designations of the militia as of their places of rendezvous) the points, the importance or exposure of which will be most likely to attract the views of the enemy, need but be suggested.

A report of the organization of your quota, when completed, and of its place or places of rendezvous, will be acceptable.

I have the honor to be, with very great respect,

Your excellency's most ob't and very humble servant.

His Excellency the Governor of

DETAIL FOR MILITIA SERVICE UNDER THE REQUISITION OF JULY 4, 1814.

States.	Number and kind of troops.	Total number.	Number of regiments.	General Staff.
New Hampshire	350 artillery 3,150 infantry	3,500	3 regiments and 1 battalion	1 major gen., 2 brig. gen's, 1 dep. quar. mas. gen., 1 assist. adjt. gen.
Massachusetts	1,000 artillery 9,000 infantry	10,000	10 regiments	2 maj. gen's, 4 brig. gen's, 1 dep. quar. mas. gen., 3 assist. dep. qr. mas. gen's, and 2 as. adj. gen's.
Rhode Island	50 artillery 450 infantry	500	1 battalion	
Connecticut	300 artillery 2,700 infantry	3,000	3 regiments	1 major gen., 1 brig. gen., 1 dep. qr. mas. gen., 1 assist. adjt. gen.
New York	1,350 artillery 12,150 infantry	13,500	13 regiments and 1 battalion	3 major gen's, 7 brig. gen's, 1 dep. qr. mas. gen., 6 as. dep. qr. mas. gen's, and 3 assist. adjt. gen's.
New Jersey	500 artillery 4,500 infantry	5,000	5 regiments	1 major gen., 2 brig. gen's, 1 dep. qr. mas. gen., 1 assist. dep. qr. mas. gen., and 1 assist. adjt. gen.
Pennsylvania	1,400 artillery 12,600 infantry	14,000	14 regiments	3 major gen's, 7 brig. gen's, 1 dep. quar. mas. gen., 6 assist. dep. quar. mas. gen's, and 3 assist. adjt. gen's.
Delaware	100 artillery 900 infantry	1,000	1 regiment	
Maryland	600 artillery 5,400 infantry	6,000	6 regiments	1 major gen., 3 brig. gen's, 1 dep. qr. mas. gen., 1 assist. dep. qr. mas. gen., and 1 assist. adjt. gen.
Virginia	1,200 artillery 10,800 infantry	12,000	12 regiments	3 major gen's, 6 brig. gen's, 1 dep. qr. mas. gen., 5 assist. dep. qr. mas. gen's, and 3 assist. adjt. gen's.
North Carolina	700 artillery 6,300 infantry	7,000	7 regiments	1 major gen., 3 brig. gen's, 1 dep. qr. mas. gen., 1 assist. dep. qr. mas. gen., and 1 assist. adjt. gen.
South Carolina	500 artillery 4,500 infantry	5,000	5 regiments	1 major gen., 2 brig. gen's, 1 dep. qr. mas. gen., 1 assist. dep. qr. mas. gen., and 1 assist. adjt. gen.
Georgia	350 artillery 3,150 infantry	3,500	3 regiments and 1 battalion.	1 major gen., 1 brig. gen., 1 dep. qr. mas. gen., 1 assist. dep. qr. mas. gen., and 1 assist. adjt. gen.
Kentucky	5,500 infantry	5,500	5 regiments and 1 battalion.	1 major gen., 2 brig. gen's, 1 dep. qr. mas. gen., 1 assist. dep. qr. mas. gen., and 1 assist. adjt. gen.
Tennessee	2,500 infantry	2,500	2 regiments and 1 battalion	1 brigadier general, 1 assist. deputy quartermaster general, 1 assistant adjutant general.
Louisiana Mississippi Territory	1,000 infantry 500 infantry	1,000 500	1 regiment 1 battalion	Louisiana and Mississippi, 1 brig. gen., and 1 assist. dep. qr. mas. gen.

No. 2.(1)

Baltimore, July 9, 1814.

SIR—The Hon. Secretary of War informed me, when at Washington, that Asst. Adjt. Gen. Hite or Jemison would be assigned to the 10th District; be pleased to mention the subject, and expedite an order to whichever of them the Secretary may designate, to report himself personally to me without delay. If an inspector of any rank could also be spared to this District, I should be glad. An hospital surgeon would also be useful, perhaps necessary.

I fear I shall find it extremely inconvenient, if not impossible, without great injury to the service, to call on the officers serving under me to constitute the necessary courts martial. If I could be allowed to call upon some of the recruiting officers most convenient to the places where the courts are to be held, it would relieve the officers of my command very much, without injuring the recruiting service.

Be pleased to lay these subjects before the Secretary of War for his commands.

I am, very respectfully, your ob't servant,

(Signed) WM. H. WINDER,

Brig. Gen. commanding 10th Military District.

CAPT. JOHN R. BELL,

Asst. Inspr. Gen., Washington City.

Nos. 3 & 9.

Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, Washington, July 12, 1814.

SIR—Your letter of the 9th instant has been received, and submitted to the Secretary of War. I am directed to inform you, that when courts martial cannot otherwise be constituted, and when sitting at places which are recruiting stations, officers belonging to these may be put on courts martial.

Major Hite and Jemison, Assistant Adjutants General, will be attached to your staff; to one of them you will assign the duties of inspector.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your ob't servant,

JAS. R. BELL,

Asst. Inspr. General.

P. S.—There is, at this place, a hospital surgeon's mate, and garrison surgeon's mate.

BRIG. GEN. W. H. WINDER,

Commanding M. Dist. a. 10 *Baltimore.*

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(1) Sent inclosed in the letter of the same date printed at page 16.

No. 4.

Crawford's Hotel, August 10, 1814.

SIR—I called at your quarters this morning to report myself to you as Assistant Adjutant General, pursuant to an order I yesterday received from the War Department; understanding you had gone to Baltimore on duty, and conceiving a pursuit thither might be rendered fruitless by your departure for some other post in your district before I could reach it, I have determined to remain here until your arrival, or until I could receive some certain advices of your movements.

I have the honor to be, with the most perfect respect, sir,
Your ob't servant,

R. G. HITE,
Assist. Adjt. Gen. 10th Military Dist.

BRIG. GEN. WM. H. WINDER.

No. 5.

Secretary's Office, July 14, 1814.

SIR—In the absence of the Governor, I deem it my duty to inform you, that your communication containing a requisition for a detachment of 14,000 Pennsylvania militia, came to the office this morning, and was immediately forwarded by express to the Governor, at Selin's Grove. Be assured the requisition will be met with all the promptness the circumstances possibly will permit.

With high considerations of respect,
I am, sir, your obedient servant,

N. B. BOILEAU,
Secretary.

JOHN ARMSTRONG, Esq.,
Secretary of War.

Secretary's Office, July 25, 1814.

SIR—The Governor has directed me to inclose to you copies of general orders issued by him in compliance with a late requisition for a military force from Pennsylvania, by the President, communicated by yours under date of the 4th inst. He has not, as you will perceive, designated places of rendezvous: he thinks it will be in time to do so in subsequent orders, which must issue before the troops can march: the threatened point of attack by the enemy will, it is probable, then be better ascertained, and a more prudent selection of place can be made. The repeal of our militia law of 1807, and its several supplements, on the 1st of August next, the disannulling of all militia commissions on that day, by a new law of the last session, granted under the old law, except the commissions of such officers as may then be in actual service, the ordering by the new law, the holding of elections of

officers by the militia after the said 1st of August, the notice of election, returns to be made; and the protracting to the fourth Monday of October next the classification of the militia, causes an almost total disorganization of our militia system between the 1st of August and the 4th of October, and presents difficulties, in yielding perfect compliance with the requisition of the President, insurmountable. It is hoped, however, that the patriotism of the people will obviate the difficulty, by a voluntary tender of services, which the Governor has invited, growing out of the unaccountable oversight of the Legislature. It is strongly doubted whether any orders can be enforced under the present state of things.

The requisition refers to the Act of Congress passed the 28th of February, 1795; under which militia can be held in service three months only; and to the law of 1814, which authorized the President to keep them six months in service. The law of Pennsylvania, passed at the last session of its Legislature, requires the Governor to mention in general orders the period for which any militia ordered into service is to remain on duty. It is desirable, therefore, to know whether the requisition is intended for three or six months' service. The offices of deputy quarter master general and assistants, and assistant adjutant generals, are not recognized by our State laws.

I have taken the liberty of inclosing to you a copy of the militia law of this State, passed at the last session of the Legislature, from a perusal of which you will perceive the difficulties under which the executive at present labors, in attempting to comply with the requisition.

With high considerations of respect, sir,

Your obedient servant,

N. B. BOILEAU,

Secretary.

JOHN ARMSTRONG, ESQ.,

Secretary of War.

No. 6.

Secretary's Office, August 27, 1814.

SIR—I am directed by the Governor to inclose to you a copy of general orders issued yesterday. The letter of General Winder containing the requisition, under date of the 18th inst., was not received until the evening of the 23d. The deranged state of our militia system prevented a more prompt compliance with the demand. To obviate, as far as practicable, the inconvenience of delay, the Governor has directed the flank and volunteer companies to push on as rapidly as possible, without any regard to the time fixed on for the general rendezvous of the ordinary drafts. The commanding officers of the companies or detachments are instructed to report themselves, and the number of their men, to General Winder, as the officer who may have command of the troops in the service of the United States in the 10th Military District.

The tents, camp equipage, as well as arms and accoutrements belonging to the

State, being insufficient to accommodate the troops called into service, the Governor relies on the deficiency being supplied by the United States as promptly as practicable, to render the men comfortable and efficient.

With high respect and esteem, sir,

Your obedient servant,

N. B. BOILEAU,
Secretary.

JOHN ARMSTRONG, ESQ.,
Secretary of War.

No. 7.

Adjutant General's Office, Richmond, July 14, 1814.

SIR—Your requisition on the militia of this State, bearing date the 4th instant, has been received.

Apprehending that the object of this measure is to have in readiness a provisional force to repel a sudden invasion, I have inclosed the general orders from this department, of the 22d ultimo, placing in a state of preparation, for such an event, upwards of 15,000 men. They are not organized, other than on the plan of the militia generally, but you will perceive that the points of rendezvous are designated. In addition to this force, the 8th, and the greater part of the 9th brigade, (amounting to 7000, and all convenient to Norfolk,) are placed in the same situation, and directed to co-operate with General Porter in resisting an attack on Norfolk.

Arms, ammunition, &c. will be placed in the hands of the whole. Should these arrangements meet your views, it will be unnecessary to make a detail on all the regiments in the State for the 12,000 called for, unless it is desirable that this number be set apart to perform a regular tour of duty. But as the troops now in readiness are adequate to the emergency contemplated, and the requisitions for those that are to perform regular duty will be made, in future, in time for every prepation to be made, it is believed that the object of your requisition has been anticipated. If this is the fact, his excellency the Governor is desirable that the regiments now held in requisition, and subject to be called out *en masse*, be considered by you as a provisional force only, and not subject to perform service beyond the continuance of the emergency which may call them into the field.

As concert in the measures of the General and State Governments is all important, permit me earnestly to solicit your earliest attention to this subject. In the meantime, arrangements will be made to take our quota from the militia generally, as that measure cannot be avoided under existing circumstances, unless the force required be provisional.

Rest assured, sir, that nothing will be wanting on the part of this State to co-operate cordially and effectually with the General Government.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

CLAIBORNE W. GOOCH,
Deputy Adjutant General.

The Hon. JOHN ARMSTRONG,
Secretary of War.

No. 8.

War Department, July 18, 1814.

SIR—A letter of the 14th instant, from Deputy Adjutant General Gooch, inclosing a copy of your general orders of the 22d ultimo, and requesting to know whether the corps put into requisition by these orders would not supply the call of the 4th instant, made through this department on the State of Virginia, has been received and submitted to the President. In reply thereto, I am instructed to state, that inasmuch as the service of the militia required by your excellency is declared to be provisional, limited, in point of time, to the emergency that calls it forth, and in point of place to the State of Virginia, and not subjected to the direction of any officer of the United States, it cannot be considered as fulfilling the views of the President.

Permit me to take this occasion to state to your excellency that 2000 of the quota of Virginia will be put at the disposition of General Winder, as commanding officer of this district.

I have the honor to be

Your excellency's most obedient servant,

JOHN ARMSTRONG.

His Excellency the Governor of Virginia.

No. 10.

Washington City, August 7, 1848.

SIR—I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 5th instant, requesting to be informed of the reasons for, and the circumstances attending the removal of the books and papers of the Department of State to a place of security in August, 1814, whilst a British fleet and army, then in the Chesapeake Bay, were menacing an attack on this city.

After a lapse of 34 years I may not be perfectly accurate in my recollection of all the circumstances attending the transaction referred to, but I will, with great pleasure, state them as they now occur to my memory.

I have no knowledge of information having been received by the Government from Messrs. Bayard and Gallatin, then ministers in Europe for adjusting a peace with Great Britain, of a proposed attack on Washington City by the British forces; but I remember to have seen, in some of the British newspapers, received from Mr. Beasely, the commissary of prisoners of War in London, who was in the habit of forwarding to the Department London newspapers by the cartels, a statement that the fleet and transports were receiving troops on board at Bordeaux, in France, with the view of operating against Washington and Baltimore, and that it was their intention to retaliate the outrages alleged to have been committed by our forces, under General Dearborn, at York, in Upper Canada, some time previously. This allegation was denied and refuted by General Dearborn, as will appear by reference to Niles' Register, vol. ix. p. 150.

Soon after learning that the British fleet were in the Chesapeake, we learned also that they were ascending the Patuxent, evidently with the view of attacking this city. Upon receiving this information, which was about a week before the enemy entered Washington, Col. Monroe, then Secretary of State, mounted his horse, and proceeded to Benedict, a small village on the Patuxent, where the British forces were being landed. From an eminence within a quarter of a mile of the village, Col. Monroe could distinctly see the number and kind of troops of which their army was composed; and recollecting the threats held out in the British papers, and believing that we had no force which could successfully resist them, he sent a note, either to Mr. John Graham, the chief clerk of the office, or myself, (I do not remember which,) by a vidette, advising us to take the best care of the books and papers of the office which might be in our power. Whereupon I proceeded to purchase coarse linen, and cause it to be made into bags of convenient size, in which the gentlemen of the office, assisted by me, placed the books and other papers, after which I obtained carts, and had them conveyed to a grist mill, then unoccupied, belonging to Mr. Edgar Patterson, situated a short distance on the Virginia side of the Potomac, beyond the chain-bridge, so called, two miles above Georgetown.

Whilst engaged in the passage way of the building with the papers, the Department of State being on one side, and the War Department on the other side of the passage, General Armstrong, then Secretary of War, on his way to his own room, stopped a short time, and observed to me, that he thought we were under unnecessary alarm, as he did not think the British were serious in their intentions of coming to Washington. I replied that we were under a different belief, and let their intentions be what they might, it was the part of prudence to preserve the valuable papers of the Revolutionary Government, comprising the declaration of Independence, the laws, the secret journals of Congress, then not published, the correspondence of General Washington, his commission resigned at the close of the war, the correspondence of General Greene, and other generals, as well as all the laws, treaties, and correspondence of the Department of State since the adoption of the Constitution down to that time.

Considering the papers unsafe at the mill, as, if the British forces got to Washington, they would probably detach a force for the purpose of destroying a foundry for cannon and shot in its neighborhood, and would be led by some evil disposed person, to destroy the mill and papers also, I proceeded to some farm houses in Virginia, and procured wagons, in which the books and papers were deposited, and I proceeded with them to the town of Leesburg, a distance of 35 miles, at which place an empty house was procured, in which the papers were safely placed, the doors locked, and the keys given to the Rev. Mr. Littlejohn, who was then, or had been, one of the collectors of internal revenue.

Being fatigued with the ride, and securing the papers, I retired early to bed, and was informed next morning by the people of the hotel where I staid, that they had seen, the preceding night, being the 24th of August, a large fire in the direction of Washington, which proved to be a light from the public buildings the enemy had set on fire, and burned them to the ground.

On the 26th of August I returned to Washington, and found the President's house and public offices still burning, and learned that the British army had evacuated the city the preceding evening, in the belief that our forces were again assembling

in their rear, for the purpose of cutting off their retreat. However this may be, they made a forced march, and left, it was reported, a considerable number of their men on the road, who were captured by a troop of horse from Frederick, in Maryland.

As a part of the British fleet soon afterwards ascended the Potomac, and plundered Alexandria of a large quantity of flour and tobacco, threatening Washington at the same time with a second invasion, it was not considered safe to bring the papers of the State Department back for some weeks, not, indeed, until the British fleet generally had left the waters of the Chesapeake. In the meantime it was found necessary for me to proceed to Leesburg occasionally, for particular papers, to which the Secretary of State had occasion to refer in the course of his correspondence.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, sir,

Your obedient servant,

S. PLEASONTON.

WM. H. WINDER, ESQ.,
Philadelphia, Penn.

No. 10, (2.)

Upper Marlborough, July 16, 1814.

SIR—I reached this place last evening in my tour of examining the country. From what I have seen and learned, it appears to me that there cannot be found a place of tolerable convenience, with reference to the objects of defence, for an encampment, except in this neighborhood. Two places near here offer many conveniences: the one two and a half miles on the western branch, and the road to Bladensburg, which I have seen; the other about five miles on the road to Washington and Piscataway, near the Woodyard, which I shall examine to-day. The former is represented as unhealthy during August and September, but possesses all other requisites: the latter is said to be healthy, and unless there should be some considerable deficiency towards the comfort and convenience of a camp, I presume will be preferable; and if, upon examination, I shall find it eligible, I shall order the 36th and 38th immediately to proceed thither. I am much embarrassed about the situation of Annapolis: it cannot be defended against a serious attack by land and water, without a large force, and many additional works; and yet it appears to me, that should the enemy contemplate serious operations in this quarter with any considerable force, it will be of the utmost importance to him to occupy it. With the command of the water, an entrenchment of 7 or 800 yards, properly protected by batteries, renders it secure against any attack by land. It furnishes a position in every respect desirable and useful to him for making enterprises against any other point, and a safe retreat against every calamity; in short, it appears to me to be the door to Washington, and it is not possible for us to shut it with our present means. Fort Madison, besides its exposed and defenceless situation, except from an approach direct by water, is so very unhealthy during the months of August and September, that it is not possible to keep a garrison in it. It is provided with two 50 pound columbiads, two 24 pounders, two 18 pounders, and one 12 and one 6 pounder. These guns will be exposed to certain capture if they are left

there, and will be turned against the town and Fort Severn with decisive effect, unless we can find the means of making a substantial defence of the place.

It appears to me that these guns should be removed, and the post mined, ready to be blown up whenever an attack of the town may be contemplated. I cannot, however, but again remark, the importance of the place to the enemy, in every point of view, renders it of the last importance to be defended, if the means can be obtained. But a considerable force ought to be instantly sent there to prepare the works necessary to give a chance of successful defence. On my arrival here last evening, I learned that an express had passed through this place to the Governor of Maryland, who stated that he was the bearer of information, that two 74's, with a number of small vessels, had made their appearance near the mouth of the Potomac. It is of importance that I obtain the earliest intelligence, if this be true, and I beg, if you have any intelligence worthy of attention, that you would communicate it to me here without delay. By the return of the express to Point Lookout, I shall write to the person employed there to give intelligence, and direct him to transmit me, by express, intelligence of all the movements of the enemy. I shall also establish express lines from all the prominent points of observation on the bay, unless these may be already established, of which I beg you to inform me. The Governor and Council of Maryland have taken steps immediately to comply with the requisition of the General Government; but I fear, from my recent experience, it will be in vain to look for any efficient aid upon a sudden call upon the militia.

W. H. WINDER,
Brig. Gen. commanding 10th M. D.

Hon. John Armstrong,
Secretary of War.

No. 11.

Upper Marlborough, July 23, 1814.

Sir—I avail myself of a suspension of the enemy's movements to proceed to Annapolis and Baltimore, to attend to the militia calls on Maryland. I returned here yesterday at two o'clock. The Governor has issued orders for calling out 3000 of the drafts, under the requisition of the 4th of July, and, at my suggestion, has appointed Bladensburg as the place of rendezvous. I preferred this place, because it was near the proposed line of defence, and contiguous to the supplies which Washington can afford. It will be necessary that arms, ammunition, accoutrements, tents, and camp equipage, be deposited there for them. I have no knowledge where these articles are in store nearest that point, nor under whose charge they are. I must pray you give the necessary orders for having the requisite deposits made at that place. I have notified the contractor.

The 2000 militia called from General Smith's division, and who are to rendezvous near Baltimore, will, I believe, need no supplies but provision and ammunition from the United States. Upon these points I have taken orders. I fear some time will elapse before either of these requisitions can be complied with, in having the men assembled, especially the former, the draft being yet to be made. Major Mar-

steller, if not too much occupied at Washington, ought to be with me in the field; but his duties will call him, probably, to so many different points, that it appears to me he will require an assistant. The enemy's force is divided between the Potomac and Patuxent. The accounts which ought most to be credited, give 500 as having landed from the Patuxent squadron, and from 1000 to 1500 from the Potomac squadron, and although, from repeated experience, we are forbid to rely on this intelligence, yet, as it is the only direct intelligence we have, and comes from respectable people having had opportunities of observation, it cannot be wholly disregarded. I shall, therefore, for the present, still retain the city volunteers, and keep them and the regulars in a post of observation and readiness. I shall myself proceed nearer the enemy for the purpose of better information and observation.

As I do not know whether only the quota of the district militia is to be drafted and placed at my disposal, or whether, on occasion, they are all considered as liable to requisition, I would thank you for information on that subject. As that part of the Pennsylvania militia, assigned for my district, are remote, and could not be called out upon emergency, might it not be expedient to draw from remotest points, leaving that portion of the militia nearest the probable scene of action, to be called out on the spur of the occasion? A deserter from the British, whose examination I have seen, says they talk of attacking Annapolis. If they know their own interest and our weakness, in fact, incapacity, to defend that point, they certainly will possess it.

I have the honor to be, with very great respect, sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. H. WINDER,

Brig. Gen. commanding 10th M. D.

Hon. John Armstrong,

Secretary of War.

No. 12.

Warburton, near Fort Washington, July 25, 1814.

Sir—From the inclosed representation of Lieutenant Edwards, and my own observation in confirmation thereof, Fort Washington is, in several respects, incomplete in its state of preparation for defence. If the 18 pound columbiads are not mounted even in the block house, ammunition ought to be sent down for them and the 18 pounders on the water battery. Lieutenant Edwards will send a requisition for the quantity and kind of ammunition necessary. Can Colonel Wadsworth, or the proper department at Washington, have the platform enlarged, which will be necessary to render the battery of the fort effectual?

I shall proceed down as far as Port Tobacco to-day.

I am, with very great respect, sir,

Your obedient servant,

WM. H. WINDER,

Brig. Gen. commanding 10th M. D.

Hon. John Armstrong,

Secretary of War, Washington City.

REPORT OF LIEUTENANT EDWARDS.

Fort Washington, July 25, 1814.

SIR—I deem it my duty to report to you the defenceless situation of this post. The necessity of mounting heavy artillery in the block house, is apparent to every military character who is acquainted with the ground adjacent to the works. It is true a few eighteen pound columbiads have been sent here, but there are no means to enable us to mount them: we are destitute of a gin and tackle. The width of the platform in the fort is another subject upon which frequent representations (I understand) were made to General Bloomfield, but without effect. The depth of platforms for heavy pieces, is generally from three to four toises, but seldom less than three. The width of this is but fourteen feet, very little more than two toises; at the first discharge of our heavy guns I have known them to recoil to the hurtoirs. When they are heated they would undoubtedly run over it, and thus be rendered useless for a time.

On the water battery there are mounted five excellent long eighteen pounders, (ship guns,) but there is not a pound of ammunition for them. In case of an attack by water, the utility of these guns would soon be discovered. In defending ourselves against maritime attacks, it is of the first importance to have a battery near the level of the water, so as to strike the hull of a ship in a horizontal line; for the chance of hitting the object is much greater than when firing from an elevation, when it is only an intersection of the line of fire by the line of the surface that the ball can strike a ship's hull. In the first case the gunner has only to move his piece horizontally; in the other he must combine his direction with those of his elevation and the progress of the ship.

Some of the gun carriages in the fort are in bad order, but not so much so as to render them unserviceable. You will perceive by this morning's report, which I inclose, what is the strength of my force: those reported sick are invalids; those on extra duty are men employed in the bake-house, garden, &c., and who are, from bodily defects, incapable of guard duty, but would be serviceable in an action.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

JAMES L. EDWARDS,
Lieut. commanding Fort Washington.

No. 13.

Piscataway, July 27, 1814.

SIR—I returned to this place from Port Tobacco this morning.

One of the enemy's frigates, the Loire, it is said, passed through the Kettle Bottoms, but returned, the day before yesterday, to Clement's Bay, where two 74's still remain. I have not obtained information where the remainder of the fleet are. If there are any of their vessels in the Patuxent, they are at or near the mouth of the river. I expect to hear of them next up the bay. I shall go on im-

mediately to Marlborough, where, or near it, I shall remain until the movements of the enemy may call me away.

General Stuart has a very considerable force at, or near, Cedar Point; Colonel Beall has his regiment, and a troop of cavalry at Port Tobacco; and Colonel Bowie, with his regiment, is at Nottingham; the regulars under my command are at Marlborough, between the enemy and any possible approach to Washington. The Governor is exerting himself to collect a force at Annapolis.

I have employed myself without intermission in examining the country, and have acquired a knowledge of its topography which will be extremely useful to me.

I should have proceeded lower down had the enemy's force moved up the rivers Potomac or Patuxent—but the retrograde movements on both the rivers induces me to suppose they will proceed to some other point, and I return to Marlborough, to be ready whenever he may appear.

I have heard nothing as yet of the dragoons from Carlisle, or the detachments of infantry from Virginia. Are there not enough recruits of the 36th and 38th to form a company each? If either have 50 men, would it not be advisable to organize and order them to join?

This will be delivered you by Major Stuart, who goes by the way of Washington, will join me at Marlborough, and take any commands you may have for me.

I am, with very great respect, sir,

Your obedient servant,

WM. H. WINDER,
Brig. Gen. commanding 10th M. D.

HON. JOHN ARMSTRONG,
Secretary of War, Washington City.

Nos. 14 & 15.

Adj. and Insp. Gen's Office, Washington, Aug 4, 1814.

SIR—I have the honor to inform you that Captain Samuel T. Dyson, a prisoner of war, *exchanged*, will shortly arrive to take command of Fort Washington, where he is to be permanently stationed. On his arrival Captain Nicholas will be relieved, and ordered to report to this office. He will go to Philadelphia for the purpose of organizing a company of recruits immediately, intended for the frontier. Colonel Laval has two troops—is waiting for horses.

I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN H. BELL,
Adj. Insp. Genl.

BRIG. GEN. WM. H. WINDER,
Com. Dist. M. 10, *Washington.*

No. 16.

(Confidential.)

New York, August 4, 1814.

DEAR GENERAL:—A desire to be actively employed, and, next to that, to have the great satisfaction of serving under an officer I so much esteem, induces me to express this desire to be stationed in the district to the command of which you have been appointed.

It would be my wish to join you with my party, and recruits enlisted during my employment on the recruiting service in this district.

Permit me to suggest my wish that you would recommend to the Secretary at War that my present party, consisting of 45 men, exclusive of officers, be completed to a full company from the Artillerists, now in this harbor, which exceed 400 men, a part of which can be safely drafted for other services, as the militia ordered to be drafted for service will be ready to supply the place of the regular artillery.

Should this arrangement meet your approbation, and be sanctioned by that of the Secretary at War, I would take the liberty of recommending as officers, to act with me under your command, 1st lieutenant, Harold Smyth, now doing duty with Captain Alexander S. Brooks at Plattsburg, and attached to me on my last campaign; 2d lieutenant, Samuel Rockwell, now on duty in this city, and 2d lieutenant, Charles S. Merchant, now on the recruiting service in this city with me.

I have again to repeat, that my motives are patriotic, and such as should influence a soldier; they are communicated in the belief that they will be received in this light.

My conduct in the campaign of 1813, while I had the command of the right division of artillery under General Hampton, was honorably noticed in General Orders.

The conduct of the officers I have taken the liberty to recommend is irreproachable. With such officers, were I placed under your immediate command, I doubt not our services would become useful; and should we meet the enemy, he would doubtless meet the fate he deserves.

I am also the more anxious for this arrangement, as the recruiting service here is very dull.

I shall feel additionally indebted to you, if, previous to any application being made on this subject to the Secretary at War, you will communicate to me your opinion.

I have the honor to be, respectfully, dear General,

Your obedient servant,

JAS. M'KEON,
Capt. Corps of Artillery.

GENERAL WINDER,
Commanding District.

No. 17.

Baltimore, August 13, 1814.

SIR—In consequence of the two regiments which were drafted from General Smith's division, under the requisition of April last, being accepted as part of the quota of Maryland, under the requisition of the 4th of July last, and the impracticability, besides impropriety, of calling any portion of those drafted from the Eastern shore, and the necessity of leaving all the men immediately upon the bay and low down upon the rivers, for local defence on the western shore, the remaining portion of the Maryland drafts to be assembled at Bladensburg, instead of being 3000, will not much exceed as many hundred. I shall require the Governor to order out all the drafts that can possibly be spared from the three lower brigades on the western shore; but since the whole number drafted on the western shore, exclusive of those drawn from General Smith's division, do not amount to 1500, I apprehend that after all shall be assembled, under this second order from the Governor of Maryland, they will not exceed 1000 men. The most convenient and immediate resource to supply this deficiency, which occurs to me, will be, to take the militia drawn out under the State authority, and now assembled at Annapolis, to the amount of 1000 men, into the service of the United States, and to call on the Governor of Pennsylvania for one regiment. This would make the militia force (independent of the two regiments near this place) under my command between 2 and 3000 men, and would complete the views of the President in the order communicated to me by you, to call for not more than 3, nor less than 2000 over and above the two regiments here.

The objects for which the militia were called to Annapolis, were such as to make it proper that the force should be under the direction of the commander of the 10th Military District. Some force ought, and must be kept at Annapolis, and if it should be deemed proper to authorize me to accept them, I should leave them there until some necessity occurred requiring them elsewhere; and the trouble and expense of advancing a detachment there would be avoided.

These men are only called out for sixty days, which may, perhaps, be long enough, and will, at all events, afford sufficient time to ascertain whether a further force will be necessary. They are already in the field, equipped in all respects, and organized. A saving of their equipments will be gained by the United States, and all the time and trouble of calling a force in their place.

I shall proceed for Bladensburg and Washington to-morrow, or the day following.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. H. WINDER,
Brig. Gen. commanding 10th M. D.

HON. J. ARMSTRONG,
Secretary of War.

No. 18.

Nottingham, August 19—9 *A. M.*

SIR—One of my officers has this moment arrived from the mouth of the Patuxent, and brings the enclosed account. I haste to forward it to you; the Admiral said, he would dine in Washington on Sunday, after having destroyed the flotilla, &c.

Yours, respectfully,

JOSHUA BARNEY.

HON. WILLIAM JONES.

One 80 or 90 gun ship, flag at the main.
Four 74 gun ships, one flag at mizzen.
Six frigates.
Ten ships about 32 guns.
Five small ships.
Two brigs.
One large schooner, 16 guns.
Two smaller schooners about 10 guns.
Thirteen large bay craft.

A large number of small boats are now under way, standing up the Patuxent, with a number of men, with a determination to go to the city of Washington, as they said yesterday.

August 18—5 *o'clock, P. M.*

They have taken all the horses in this part of the world; and one of the officers said yesterday, they had about 700 on board.

No. 19.

War Department, July 12, 1813.

SIR—In reply to the inquiry of the honorable the Senate, viz., "What preparations have been made, and are now in readiness, for the defence of the Navy Yard and other public property in the city of Washington, in case it should be assailed by the enemy?" I have the honor to report that, on the water line, the means of defence are of two kinds, naval and military; and that there are of the former, one frigate, two schooners, and three gun-boats, so stationed as to co operate with Fort Washington; that this fort and its covering work have been recently put into a state of thorough repair, are well equipped with heavy cannon, furnaces, &c. &c., and are now occupied by a competent garrison of United States artillerists; that, to any attempts on the land side, we can oppose the 10th, 36th, 38th, and a detach-

ment of the 5th regiments of infantry, and one battalion of militia; the whole amounting to 1600 effectives; that the Navy Yard and marine establishment can furnish an additional defence of nearly one battalion; that two companies of light artillery have been organized under an officer of much experience, and are supplied with cannon, caissons, &c.; that several uniformed corps are in weekly drill, and ready for service the moment that a call upon them shall become necessary; that, within the District alone, we may count on an additional force of nearly 1200 effective militia, and that a competent supply of arms, and of fixed and loose ammunition, has been placed within their reach.

I have the honor to be, with great respect,

Your most ob't humble servant,

JOHN ARMSTRONG.

The Chairman of the Military Committee of the Senate of the United States.

[From page 384 of "American State Papers, Class V., Military Affairs," vol. i.]

No. 20.

Mount Air, Virginia, County of Fairfax, April 10, 1847.

Col. Thomas L. M'Kenney.

Sir—I have examined General Walter Smith's statement, contained in your Pamphlet in reply to Mr. Kosciusko Armstrong, in reference to the conflagration of the city of Washington, and my action in connection therewith; and from my perfect recollection of the facts, I unhesitatingly confirm it as it relates to me.

On the afternoon of the 23d August, 1814, I received, by Mr. Graham, an order from the President, through General Winder, in reply to a communication I had made early in the morning of that day, by the same gentleman, addressed to General Winder, to march with my whole force to the city of Washington. I immediately took up my line of march, and reached the city some time before sunset, and at the earliest moment waited upon the President, who received me most cordially, and expressed great gratification that I had obeyed his summons so promptly. After stating the want of arms, &c., for my men, he directed me to General Armstrong, who, he said, would have everything promptly arranged to my satisfaction. I lost no time in calling upon the Secretary of War, and stated to him our wants and anxiety to join our brethren in arms. He replied, that I must call on Col. Carberry, who would do what was necessary. Upon my stating that my men were in high spirits, and not at all fatigued, and expressing our anxiety to be equipped at once, he said that was out of the question; that it would be time enough in the morning, when it would be attended to. I retired much disappointed and chagrined, and went, after making several ineffectual efforts to find Col. Carberry, to take lodgings with my friend, Doctor Ewell, then residing on Capitol Hill. At 10 o'clock at night Col. John Tayloe brought me a peremptory order from the Secretary of War, bearing date 23d August, 1814, for me to repair to Washington with the regiment under my command, with the utmost dispatch, requiring by Col. Tayloe my acknowledgment

of its receipt, and a copy. Not a little surprised at such an order, and more particularly with the request of a copy, after the intercourse I had had with the Secretary of War hours before, in acknowledging the receipt of the order, I stated that I had received a previous order from the President, through General Winder, under which I had some time before repaired to Washington. Col. Tayloe, on my reading it to him, remarked, that as to what had previously occurred, it mattered not; all he required, was merely an acknowledgment of the receipt, and a copy. I preferred my own course, and handed him the acknowledgment as I had written it, as may be seen by reference thereto. As to the delay next morning in getting our equipments, &c., your reply is perfectly correct.

My introduction to the Secretary of War was through my friend, Doctor Ewell, and Doctor Blake; but whether the result of the conflict at Bladensburg would have been different if I had been allowed to participate therein, with 7 or 800 fresh Virginia troops, is not for me to say; so you must take the following statement for what it is worth. Some time after, upon my calling upon Col. Monroe, then Secretary of War, I found Commodore Barney in the antechamber, speaking to several gentlemen as to the battle of Bladensburg—in the course of his remarks, (not knowing me,) he said: "If Minor, with his Virginia regiment, could have been allowed to come up in time so as to support my artillery for a few minutes longer, the British never would have reached Washington." Col. Tayloe may have previously sent me a communication, by a dragoon, as he has stated, but I never received any; and that he handed me the order in person, at 10 o'clock at night, as stated, there is no mistake about it.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEORGE MINOR,
Late Col. 10th Regt. Va. Ma.

No. 21.

LETTER OF THE LATE SECRETARY OF WAR TO THE EDITORS OF THE BALTIMORE PATRIOT.

It may be due to myself, and is certainly due to others, that the reasons under which I retired from the direction of the War Department, at a juncture so critical as the present, should be fully and promptly known to the public. These reasons will be found in the following brief exposition of facts.

On the evening of the 29th ultimo, the President called at my lodgings, and stated that a case of much delicacy had occurred; that a high degree of excitement had been raised among the militia of the District; that he was himself an object of their suspicions and menaces; that an officer of that corps had given him notice, that they would no longer obey any orders coming through me as Secretary of War; and that, in the urgency of the case, it might be prudent so far to yield to the impulse as to permit some other person to exercise my functions in relation to the defence of the District.

To this statement and proposition, I answered substantially as follows: That I was aware of the excitement to which he alluded, that I knew its source, and had marked its progress; that the present was not a moment to examine its more occult causes, objects, and agents; that it ostensibly rested on charges known to himself to be false, that it was not for me to determine how far the supposed urgency of the case made it proper for him to yield to an impulse so vile and profligate, so injurious to truth, and so destructive of order; but that, for myself, there was no choice; that I could never surrender a part of my legitimate authority for the preservation of the rest--that I must exercise it wholly, or not at all; that I came into office with objects exclusively public; and that to accommodate my principles or my conduct to the humors of a village mob, stimulated by faction and led by folly, was not the way to promote these; and that, if his decision was taken in conformity to the suggestions he had made, I entreated him to accept my resignation. This he declined doing. It was an extent, he was pleased to say, to which he meant not to go; that he knew the excitement was limited, as well with regard to time as to place; that he was now, and had always been, fully sensible of the general zeal, diligence, and talent which I had put into the discharge of my duty, and that it would give him pleasure were I to take time to consider his proposition. I renewed the assurance of my great personal respect, and my readiness to conform to his wishes on all proper occasions. I remarked, that whatever zeal, diligence, and talent I possessed had been employed freely, but firmly, and according to my best views of the public good, and that, as long as they were left to be so exerted, they were at the service of my country; but that the moment they were made to bow to military usurpation or political faction, there should be an end of their public exercise. We now parted, with an understanding that I should leave Washington the following morning.

It has been since stated to me as a fact, (to which I give the most reluctant belief,) that on the morning of the 29th, and before my arrival in the city, a committee of the inhabitants of Georgetown, of whom Alexander C. Hanson, editor of the Federal Republican, was one, had waited on the President, *by deputation*, and had obtained from him a promise that I should no longer direct the military defences of the District. On this fact all commentary is unnecessary.

It but remains to exhibit and to answer the several charges raised against me, and which form the groundwork of that excitement to which the President has deemed it prudent to sacrifice his authority in declining to support mine. They are as follows, viz:

1st. That (from ill will to the District of Columbia, and a design to remove the seat of government) I gave orders for the retreat of the army in the affair of the 24th ult., under circumstances not making retreat necessary or proper.

This charge has not for its support the shadow of truth. The commanding general will do me the justice to say, that I gave him no such order, and that he was, and is, under the impression, that the retreat was made earlier than I believed it to be proper. To the President I appeal, whether I did not point out the disorder and retreat of a part of the first line soon after the action began, and stigmatize it as base and infamous.

2d. That, in despite of the remonstrances of General Winder, and by the interposition of my authority, I had prevented him from defending the Capital.

This charge contains in it a total perversion of the truth. When the head of the retiring column reached the Capital, it was halted for a moment. General Winder here took occasion to state to Mr. Monroe and myself, that he was not in condition to maintain another conflict, and that his force was broken down by fatigue and dispersion. Under this representation we united in opinion that he should proceed to occupy the heights of Georgetown.

3d. That I had withdrawn the covering party from the rear of Fort Washington, and had ordered Captain Dyson to blow up the fort without firing a gun.

This charge is utterly devoid of truth. The covering party was withdrawn by an order from General Winder, and Captain Dyson's official report shows that the orders under which he acted were derived from the same source, though, no doubt, mistaken or misrepresented.

4th. That by my orders the Navy Yard had been burned. This, like its predecessors, is a positive falsehood.

Perceiving that no order was made for apprising Commodore Tingey of the retreat of the army, I sent Major Bell to communicate the fact, and to say that the Navy Yard could no longer be covered. The commodore was, of course, left to follow the suggestions of his own mind, or to obey the orders, if orders had been given, of the Navy Department.

5th. And lastly, that means had not been taken to collect a force sufficient for the occasion.

As the subject of this charge may very soon become one of Congressional inquiry, I shall at present make but a few remarks.

1st. That no means within reach of the War Department had been omitted or withheld; that a separate military district, embracing the seat of government, had been created; that an officer of high rank and character had been placed in charge of it; that to him was given full authority to call for supplies, and for a militia force of *fifteen thousand men;* that to this force was added the 36th regiment of the line, a battalion of the 38th, detachments of the 12th, of the artillery, and of the dragoons, the marine corps, and the crews of the flotilla, under the special command of Commodore Barney, making a total of 16,300 men.

General Winder's official report of the engagement of the 24th ult. shows how much of this force had been assembled, and the causes why a greater portion of it had not been got together. These will be found to have been altogether extraneous from the Government, and entirely beyond its control: and

2d. That from what is now known of the enemy's force, of the loss he sustained in the enterprise, of the marks of panic under which he retreated, &c. &c., it is obvious, that if all the troops assembled at Bladensburg had been faithful to themselves and to their country, the enemy would have been beaten, and the Capital saved.

JOHN ARMSTRONG.

Baltimore, September 3, 1814.

No. 22.

Adjutant and Insp. Gens. Office, Feb. 18, 1815.

SIR—I have the honor to inclose to you a certified copy of the Report of the Court of Inquiry appointed to investigate your military conduct, as commanding general of the 10th Military District during the summer of 1814.

I am directed by the Secretary of War to advise you, that the President has been pleased to approve the report and opinion of the Court; and to express to you the very favorable opinion which the Executive entertains of your military and civil character.

I hope you will do me the favor to accept the new assurances of my great respect and regard.

D. PARKER,
Adj. and Insp. Gen.

BRIG. GEN. W. H. WINDER, *U. States Army,*
Gettysburgh, Pa.

No. 23.

Brookville, Aug. 26, 1814—10 *o'clock, P. M.*

DEAR SIR—I expected this morning to have reached General W. and yourself before your departure from Montgomery C. H., but was delayed so that I did not arrive there till six o'clock, partly to obtain quarters, partly to be within communication with you. I have proceeded thus far, in company with Mr. Rush, General Mason, &c., and avail myself of the bearer to inform you, that I will either wait here till you join me, or follow and join you, as you may think best. Let me know your idea on the subject by the bearer. If you decide on coming hither, the sooner the better. Mr. Rush will remain here also. Mr. Jones is with my family and his own on the other side of the Potomac, but will come to the city the moment he hears of its evacuation. General Armstrong and Mr. Campbell are, I understand, at Fredericktown. I shall give them immediate notice of the change in the state of things, and desire them to conform to it. A letter from General Smith (of Winchester) to General A. was put into my hands, by an express at Montgomery C. H., stating that a brigade of militia could come on or not, as might be desired. I have sent it open to Gen. W., who can judge best of the answer proper to be given, and will act on the letter accordingly.

Accept my best wishes and great esteem.

J. MADISON.

JAMES MONROE, ESQ., *Secretary of State.*
To be opened by GEN. WINDER.

Montpr., Sept. 15, 1834.

DEAR SIR—I am sensible of the delay in acknowledging your letter of and regret it. But apart from the crippled condition of my health, which almost forbids the use of the pen, I could not forget that I was to speak of occurrences

after a lapse of twenty years, and at an age in its 84th year; circumstances so readily, and, for the most part, justly referred to, as impairing the confidence due to recollections and opinions.

You wish me to express personally my approval of your father's character and conduct at the battle of Bladensburg, on the ground of my being fully acquainted with everything connected with them, and of an ability to judge of which no man can doubt.

You appear not to have sufficiently reflected, that, having never been engaged in military service, my judgment in the case could not have the weight, with others, which your partiality assumes for it; but might rather expose me to a charge of presumption in deciding on points purely of a professional description; nor was I in the field as a spectator till the order of the battle had been formed, and had approached the moment of its commencement.

With respect to the order of the battle, that, being known, will speak for itself; and the gallantry, activity, and zeal of your father during the action had a witness in every observer. If his efforts were not rewarded with success, candor will find an explanation in the peculiarities he had to encounter, especially in the advantages possessed in the veteran troops of the enemy over a militia, which, however brave and patriotic, could not be a match for them in the open field.

I cannot but persuade myself that the evidence on record, and the verdict of the Court of Inquiry, will outweigh and outlive censorious comments, doing injustice to the character and memory of your father. For myself, I have always had a high respect for his many excellent qualities; and am gratified by the assurance you give me of the place I held in his esteem and regard.

With friendly respects and salutations,

JAMES MADISON.(1)

W. H. WINDER, ESQ.,
Philadelphia.

No. 24.

Department of War, Sept. 22, 1814.

SIR—I have to request that you will, without any unavoidable delay, repair to the army on the Strait of Niagara, where your services are deemed of importance.

On your arrival there you will report yourself to the commanding general, who will give you a command.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, sir,
Your most obedient servant,

JAMES MONROE.

BRIG. GEN. WM. H. WINDER,
Baltimore.

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(1) It should be borne in mind that the politics of General Winder were not those of the administration.

No. 25.

Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, Feb. 25, 1815.

GENERAL ORDER.

The Secretary of War directs that the following Warrant, with the Report of the Court of Inquiry in the case of Brigadier General Winder, be published to the army.

WARRANT.

Brigadier General W. H. Winder, of the United States Army, having applied for a Court of Inquiry, to examine and inquire into his conduct as commanding general of the 10th Military District, during his command thereof in the summer of 1814:

A Court of Inquiry, to consist of Major General W. Scott, President, Col. John R. Fenwick and Col. Wm. Drayton, members, is hereby appointed to meet at Baltimore on the 26th day of January, 1815, to examine into the conduct of Brigadier General Winder, as embraced in the Report of the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States by their Committee appointed to inquire into the causes and particulars of the invasion of the city of Washington by the British forces in the month of August, 1814, and such other evidence and documents as may be laid before the Court by Lieut. J. M. Glassell,(1) who is hereby appointed recorder of the same. The Court is hereby empowered and required to give its opinion as to the merits of the case, for the information of the President of the United States; and for so doing this shall be a sufficient warrant.

Given under my hand, and the seal of the War Office, this 21st day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifteen, and of the independence of the United States the 39th.

By command of the President of the United States.

JAMES MONROE,
Secretary of War.

REPORT.

The Court of Inquiry ordered to examine into and report upon the conduct of Brigadier General Winder, so far as it is connected with the capture and destruction of the City of Washington in August, 1814, unanimously submit the following as the result of their investigations.

The Court, with great attention and much labor, have perused the numerous papers and documents referred to them, from whence they collect—that Brigadier General Winder was appointed to the command of the 10th Military District, of which Washington was a part, on the 2d of July, 1814; that immediately thereafter he

(1) By subsequent order Lieut. G. L. Nicholas was appointed recorder.

took every means in his power to put that District into a proper state of defence; that from the period when well grounded apprehensions were entertained that the enemy meditated an attack upon the Capital, his exertions were great and unremitted; that through these exertions he was enabled to bring into the field, on the 24th of August, 1814, the day on which the battle of Bladensburg was fought, about 5 or 6000 men, all of whom, excepting 400, were militia; that he could not collect much more than one-half of this force until a day or two previously to the engagement, and 6 or 700 of them did not arrive until fifteen minutes before its commencement; that from the uncertainty whether Baltimore, the city of Washington, or Fort Washington would be selected as the point of attack, it was necessary that Brigadier General Winder's troops should frequently change their positions, owing to which, and alarms causelessly excited on the night of the 23d of August, they were all much fatigued, and many of them nearly exhausted at the time when the hostile army was crossing the bridge at Bladensburg; that the officers commanding the troops were generally unknown to General Winder, and but a small number of them had enjoyed the benefit of military instruction or experience.

The members of this Court, in common with their fellow-citizens, lament deeply the capture of the Capital; and they regard with no ordinary indignation the spoliation of its edifices, those public monuments of art and science, always deemed sacred by a brave and generous foe; but amidst these mingled and conflicting sensations, they nevertheless feel it to be their duty to separate the individual from the calamities surrounding him, and to declare that to the officer upon whose conduct they are to determine, no censure is attributable. On the contrary, when they take into consideration the complicated difficulties and embarrassments under which he labored, they are of opinion, notwithstanding the result, that he is entitled to no little commendation; before the action he exhibited industry, zeal, and talent, and during its continuance a coolness, a promptitude, and a personal valour highly honorable to himself, and worthy of a better fate.

W. SCOTT,
Major. Gen. and President.

Attest G. L. NICHOLAS,
Lieut. and Recorder.

The President of the United States having been pleased to approve the foregoing opinion of the Court of Inquiry, Brigadier General Winder will honorably resume his command, and report to the major general commanding districts Nos. 4 and 10.

By order of the Secretary of War.

D. PARKER,
Adj. and Inspr. General.

No. 26.

Head Quarters, 4th and 10th Military Dists., Baltimore, March 12, 1815.

GENERAL ORDERS.

The command of the 10th Military District is assigned to Brigadier General Wm. H. Winder, of the U. S. Army, who will make his report to, and correspond directly with, the War Department.

W. SCOTT,
Maj. Gen. commanding.

No. 27.

Adjutant and Inspector General's Office, March 31, 1815.

SIR—I have the honor to request that you will report to this office the posts and places within your district, which it may be necessary to garrison in time of peace, and the number and kind of troops which will be required for each.

This information will be necessary to enable the Secretary of War rightly to distribute the small force which Congress has left to the disposal of the Executive.

Your early attention to this subject will promote the interests of the army, and very much oblige

Your most obedient servant,

D. PARKER,
Adjt. and Insp. Gen.

The Commanding General Dist. No. 10, *Baltimore.*

No. 28.

Baltimore, May 24, 1815.

SIR—I have received your circular of the 22d inst., enclosing the army list for the peace establishment, and the accompanying orders, to which I shall conform.

I beg to avail myself of this opportunity to state, that I did not req: st, not to be considered as one of those from whom the selection to compose the peace establishment was to be made, from any disinclination to continue in the service—on the contrary, I had wholly surrendered myself to the profession of a soldier—but because I was aware that there were officers of my own grade, who, to say the least, had been more fortunate than myself, and others who had, at an early period, devoted themselves to a military life, and would, therefore, feel much greater embarrassment in returning to civil employment than myself; and I was not willing to place myself in competition with gentlemen who, from those causes, if none other, I

thought had a claim to preference. I wish this motive to be distinctly understood by the President, that my having declined to take my chance of continuance in service at this moment may not prejudice my pretensions on any future occasion.

I beg you will also allow me to ask if any, and what representations were made to induce my brother's name to be stricken out of the army list as judge advocate, after the unanimous recommendation of the board, volunteered on their part, in his behalf. I cannot but feel solicitous on this point, since I cannot suppose that the recommendation of the board so honorably given in his behalf would have been overruled, unless some very strong objections, unknown to the board, had been made against him. The motive which produces this solicitude on my part will, I am sure, recommend itself very decisively to your feelings.

I am, &c. &c.,

W. H. WINDER.

HON. A. J. DALLAS,
Acting Secretary of War, Washington City.

Department of War, May 29, 1815.

SIR—I have received your letter of the 24th instant. The motives of your conduct in declining to be considered as one of the officers from whom the selection to compose the military peace establishment was to be made, have been justly appreciated; and they will be communicated to the President in compliance with your request.

The very sincere personal respect and esteem which I feel for you, will induce me to depart from the rule that I had presented to myself in relation to the arrangement of the military peace establishment. The general officers were consulted *confidentially*, their opinions, though entitled to great attention, could never be regarded as conclusive; and you will readily perceive, that private individuals have no right to demand the reasons which influence this department in the performance of its public duties. But as an exception to my general rule, and in a spirit of perfect good will, the inquiry in the case of your brother shall be answered.

The Act of Congress of the 11th of January, 1812, authorizes the appointment of a judge advocate to each division of the army. Maryland is at the extreme of divisions of the North; and it was deemed expedient, in particular, that one of the judge advocates should reside in the State of New York, where the great body of the army of that division will probably be stationed. This view of the subject will naturally account for the change that has been made; and be assured that no sentiment of disrespect or unkindness mingled in the transaction.

A. J. DALLAS.

BRIG. GEN. W. H. WINDER.

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